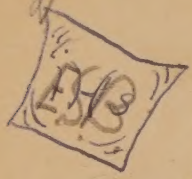
WASHINGTON THE YOUNG LEADER

GEORGE WILLIAM GERWIG

From James McElhoes.

To [redacted] Mary

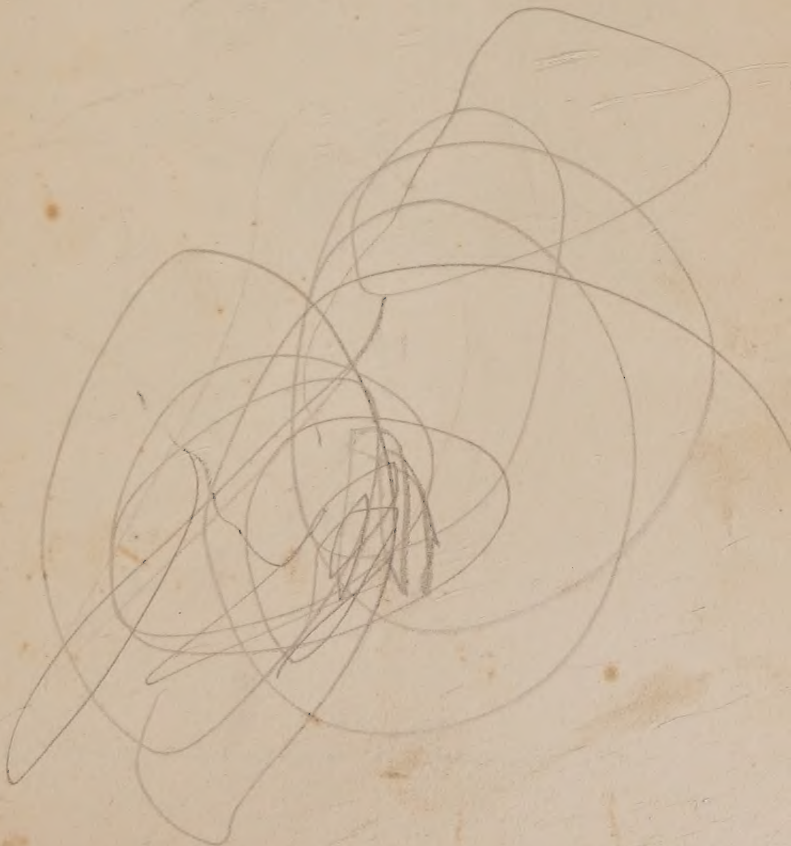
Eugene T. W. Bush 33



Remember
Clair Finter
in the Freshman
Class of 1933,
and
Donald Graham
Clyde T. Graham
Ruby Graham

Eugene

WASHINGTON
THE YOUNG LEADER



Washington watched the troops wade across the shallow ford.

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WASHINGTON
THE YOUNG LEADER

BY

GEORGE WILLIAM GERWIG

AUTHOR OF
"THE ART OF THE SHORT STORY," "TEMPLED HILLS," "SCHOOLS WITH A PERFECT SCORE,"
"SHAKESPEARE'S GIRLS AND WOMEN," ETC.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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C

TO BOYS EVERYWHERE
IN MEMORY OF
A LAD WHO GAVE HIS LIFE
FOR LIBERTY

FOREWORD

Every American boy should tramp in the footsteps of Washington over the hills at the forks of the Ohio; stand in the old Block House at the Point and look out of its port-holes at the ground once occupied by Fort Duquesne; gaze over the same rivers that still flow silently to the sea; scout over the Braddock Trail; tread the snow-clad hills of Valley Forge; and, best of all, sail down the Potomac and dedicate his soul to service beside Washington's Tomb at Mount Vernon.

As he camps in the same woods, tramps the old trails, swims and fishes in the same streams, endures something of the same cold and hunger, he will come into fuller understanding of that other American whom he formerly thought of merely as a great general.

No boy can step, at a single stride, into the full uniform of the six-foot general of the Continental Army. He can, however, begin where Washington began as a lad, and follow in the footsteps farther even than he dreams.

No Rough Rider ever leaped, untrained, into the saddle. Every good soldier has behind him years of hard training that go to make him a man, centuries of traditions which help to give him an unconquerable spirit.

The boyhood of no other great American gives more of the real life of the out-of-doors, of training in woodcraft, of strength and vigor, of courage and endurance, of service and sacrifice for others, of that practice and precept that go to make a good American than do the early years of George Washington.

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WASHINGTON
THE YOUNG LEADER

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CHAPTER I

IN DAYS OF OLD

THE MOTHER COUNTRY—SOLDIER FOREFATHERS—A VIRGINIA PLANTATION—EARLY BOYHOOD—SCHOOL AND PLAY—LETTERS—A SUDDEN LOSS

Over a century before George Washington was born in the English colony of Virginia, his ancestors were well known.

The family home of the Washingtons in England was at Sulgrave Manor. The Cavaliers had been fighting bravely for their king; but the Puritans, under Oliver Cromwell, conquered them, captured the king, and put him to death.

Colonel Henry Washington then won a name for himself. At Worcester he was in command of the king's men. Lord Fairfax, a general under Oliver Cromwell, demanded the surrender of the town. Colonel Washington replied bravely, however, and compelled the granting of easy terms.

Many of the Cavaliers left England after their defeat, and, sailing across the Atlantic, settled in Virginia. The new colony received them gladly. They were men of good blood and gentle manners. Soon they secured large plantations and built great square houses, with wide verandas. Virginia was entirely unlike New England in many ways. There were no large cities and no factories. The only towns were Norfolk, beside the sea, and Williamsburg, the capital,

and they were both small. There were scarcely any roads, and they were hardly necessary, for almost every plantation could be reached by boat up one of the countless rivers or arms of Chesapeake Bay.

Each plantation was a quiet, dreamy little world all by itself. On a velvet lawn, surrounded by lofty trees, was the planter's house; on one side of it the garden, with jasmine and roses; on the other the low cabins of the negroes. About once a year a ship sailed up the bay from England, bringing clothes, books, medicine, everything needed which was not raised on the plantation. It was loaded with tobacco and sailed back to England again, perhaps taking some of the sons of the planters along to attend the same schools their fathers and grandfathers had attended.

John Washington, a relative of Colonel Henry Washington, was one of the Cavaliers who came to Virginia to try his fortunes in the new colony. He was active and popular with his neighbors. During one of the Indian wars he was made colonel, then he was elected to the House of Burgesses and helped make the laws. The parish in which he lived was named Washington Parish in his honor.

Captain Augustine Washington, the father of George Washington, was one of the grandsons of John, and was also vigorous and prosperous. He owned five thousand acres of land, many slaves, an interest in some iron-mines in Maryland and Virginia, and was captain of the ship which carried the ore from the mines to London.

While he was on one of his journeys to London the captain met Mary Ball, a beautiful Virginian who was there visiting friends. Her father's plantation in Virginia was called Epping Forest, after the famous old forest near

London. And, because of her beauty, Mary was called "The Rose of Epping Forest." The captain, a widower with two sons, fell in love with Mary and married her.

They gave their home the good old English name of Wakefield. It was on Bridges Creek, and was a low story-and-a-half house, with a steep roof slanting almost to the ground behind and an outside chimney at each end. The garden was fragrant with honeysuckle and sweetbriar, and the fertile fields sloped gently down to the broad Potomac. From where the house stood they could see the wooded Maryland shore, with here and there a great plantation. The Potomac flowed gently down to Chesapeake Bay, the bay led to the Atlantic, and the Atlantic to the mother country.

At Wakefield, on the 22d of February, 1732, a blue-eyed boy with sunny hair was born—GEORGE WASHINGTON.

The early years of George Washington were passed much like those of other Virginia plantation boys. He had a colored "mammy" to look after him. His elder half-brothers, Lawrence and Augustine, had been sent to England to attend a boarding-school at Appleby, as their father had done. In time three younger brothers were born, and a little sister Betty, of whom George was very fond, and who was like him in many ways. The little house in which they lived had three rooms down-stairs and an attic where the children slept, and bumped their heads against the rafters if they sat up quickly in bed. There were no carpets on the floor. The furniture was plain. Their father was away from home a great deal on his voyages to England. Their mother was constantly busy with her many duties. She managed the plantation in the absence of her husband,

looked after the slaves, directed the cooking, wove, spun, helped wash and make the clothes, was the first up in the morning and the last in bed at night. The pickaninnies played about the plantation. Mary Washington ruled her estate firmly but justly, scolding and grumbling a good deal

At Wakefield, on the 22d of February, 1732, a blue-eyed boy with sunny hair was born—George Washington.

even to the day of her death. Her industry, her fairness, her love of truth, and her great common sense were both an example and an inheritance to her son George.

When George was three years old the family moved from Wakefield to Hunting Creek, fifty miles up the Potomac River, the home which was afterward called Mount Vernon. This was the home of his early boyhood and of forty-six

years of his later manhood, one-half of them spent in the service of his country.

One day in the spring of 1739, while his father was absent, the house took fire from some rubbish burning in the garden. The slaves tried to carry water up the hill from the river and put out the fire, but they failed, and the house burned down. Mary Washington had been directing the slaves, who helped her get out some valuables and the best furniture. There was all the excitement of a fire, the frightened negroes wailing, praying, and standing about helplessly wringing their hands. But their mistress was cool and collected, and, when the fire was over, had the table set and dinner served in a near-by building.

It was at this home that the cherry-tree-and-hatchet incident is said to have occurred. And it was here that his father surprised the boy by showing him cabbages growing in the garden making the name

GEORGE WASHINGTON

and then explaining to him that in this world things do not happen by chance.

George was now seven years old. His parents left this plantation and moved to another called Ferry Farm, on the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg, nearer the iron-works in which Captain Washington was interested.

Lawrence Washington, George's half-brother, was his father's eldest son. According to an old English custom, he would, when his father died, become "the head of the family." It was to educate and train him for this position that he had been sent to school in England.

One day when George was about eight years old, a ship

from England came sailing up the river to their landing. All was excitement on the plantation. The pickaninnies ran about the shore open-eyed. The older slaves were busy getting the hogsheads of tobacco ready to load. Mary Washington and some of the neighbors from near-by plantations were making up the orders for things they wished the captain to bring from London on his next voyage.

At last the ship drew near enough for them to make out the faces of the crew and passengers. And there was Lawrence Washington, safe home again from school in England!

In the early days the schools in Virginia were not very good. The one George attended while at Ferry Farm was located in a hut in a worn-out field which was covered with undergrowth. The teacher's name was Grove, but the boys called him "Hobby." He was an ignorant one-eyed church sexton. In England he had broken some of the laws, and had been sent to Virginia as punishment. Either his crime was not great or he became a better man in America, for his neighbors trusted him with the double position of sexton and schoolmaster. George learned but little more than his letters here.

At first George rode to school mounted on an old horse in front of one of the negro slaves. Later his father gave him a pony of his own, and he rode happily to school and back to his own great delight, but keeping his mother in continual alarm.

Every boy of spirit, in those days, expected to be a soldier when he grew up and to fight against the French, the Spaniards, or the Indians. Lawrence Washington had already gone and was gallantly serving the King of England in Spain and in the West Indies. He was a captain of Vir-

ginia riflemen at twenty-two and courageously led his company in a famous charge against a Spanish fort. Only half of the twelve hundred men who charged escaped alive. By his bravery and his manly qualities Lawrence won the high regard of Admiral Vernon, who was in command of the English fleet.

George had seen Lawrence get ready and leave for the war. He eagerly listened to every letter that came telling of Lawrence's thrilling adventures. And, boy-like, he organized his schoolmates into a company of soldiers, with corn-stalk guns and gourd drums. He was the captain of the English, and marched and charged against the Spaniards. Or they fought the Indians with bows and arrows, taking make-believe scalps with wooden knives to their hearts' content.

It is said that when he was ten years old he was engaged in a snowball fight. The leader of the enemy was Bill Bustle. During the sham battle he hit George in the eye with a snowball in which he had packed a stone. The eye turned black, and George had to stay at home several days while his mother poulticed it. She was indignant, and urged Captain Washington to go to school and see that the Bustle boy got his just deserts. But Captain Washington said:

"No, it's a boys' quarrel. George must learn to fight his own battles."

George learned. The first day after his return to school George tackled the bully, although he was five years older and nearly twice as large as himself. He succeeded in getting him down, and pounded him so hard that Bustle soon cried "Enough! Enough!" George was so angered by the memory of that snow-covered stone that he kept pound-

ing until several of the larger boys pulled him, pale and breathless, from his beaten bully.

One of George's boy friends, who afterward also became famous, was Richard Henry Lee. Here are two of the letters they wrote to each other, Lee's written evidently without help and Washington's carefully corrected:

Richard Henry Lee to George Washington

Pa brought me two pretty books full of pictures. He got them in Alexandria they have pictures of dogs and cats and tigers and elefants and ever so many things cousin bids me send you one of them it has a picture of an elefant and a little Indian boy on his back like uncle jo's sam pa says if I learn my tasks good he will let uncle jo bring me to see you will you ask your ma to let you come to see me.

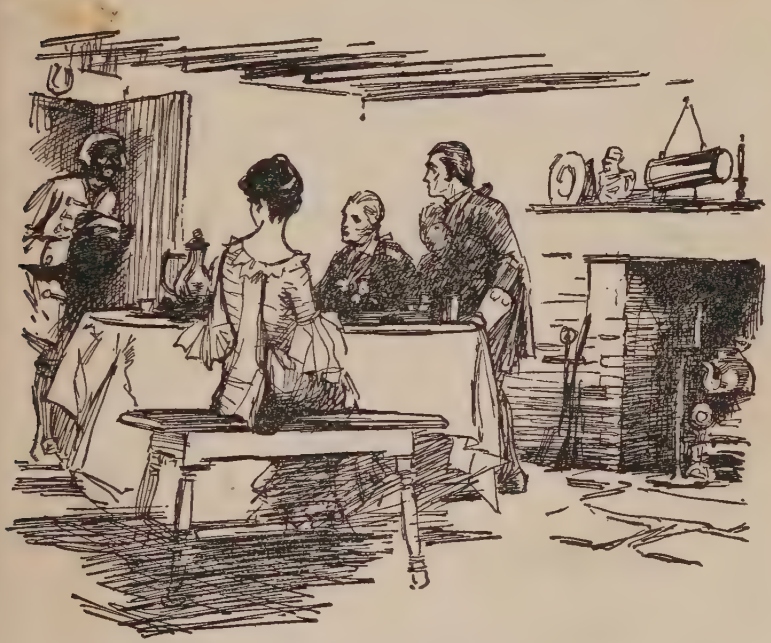
George Washington to Richard Henry Lee

Dear Dickey, I thank you very much for the picture book you gave me. Sam asked me to show him the pictures and I showed him all the pictures in it; and I read to him how the tame elephant took care of the master's little boy, and put him on his back and would not let anyone touch his master's little son. I can read three or four pages sometimes without missing a word. Ma says I may go to see you, and stay all day with you next week if it be not rainy. She says I may ride my pony Hero if Uncle Ben will go with me and lead Hero.

Your good friend,
George Washington.

These letters are not the last word, however, for when the boys grew up, Lee became famous as a writer of good English, while Washington used to misspell words in his letters, even when he had become President!

When Washington was twelve years old and while he was visiting two boy cousins, twenty miles from home, his father, Captain Augustine Washington, was suddenly taken seriously ill. While the boys were merry at supper,



Peter suddenly appeared with the news of the captain's illness.

Peter, the colored slave who usually looked after George, suddenly appeared with the news of the captain's illness. George heard the news with a kind of awe, not realizing how serious it was. He rode home behind Peter, finding his mother in a state of distraction. She led George to the bedside of his father, crying:

"He is dying!"

The captain was groaning and in great pain. The children gathered around him, and he kissed them in turn, saying to George:

"Be good to your mother."

Throughout his life George kept the promise he made as he knelt, crying, at the bedside. Captain Washington died that night, and George lost one of his best friends.

CHAPTER II

A LAD OF SPIRIT

A BROKEN HOME—A STIRRING SON—THE FIRST HUNT—SURPRISE OF THE GENTRY—A HUNTER GOES LAME—WHO SHALL BE WHIPPED?—LOYALTY OR DISLOYALTY—HUNTING AND FISHING

Any home, with the father gone, places a heavy burden upon the mother. George's father left his estate divided as fairly as the law and the custom of the time would permit, between his second wife, Mary Washington, and the two sets of children. To Lawrence he gave the plantation at Hunting Creek. To Augustine he gave Wakefield, and to his wife the Ferry Farm. He provided that if Lawrence should die without children, Hunting Creek should go to George.

If there is jealousy and distrust in a family instead of love and confidence there is constant trouble. Fortunately both half-brothers were also good friends of George throughout their entire lives. George loved them both, made his home with each of them in turn, and each became, in some ways, his model of what a Virginia gentleman should be. He was also very fond of his own brothers, and especially of his sister, Betty. To one of these brothers, Jack, he often wrote long letters, even when he was commander-in-chief, and these letters tell us many things we would otherwise never have known.

"My son," said his mother to George one day, "you will have, when you become of age, only a poor estate. I am but a lone widow, and much as I should like to do so, I shall not be able to send you to England to school. Neither will I be able to send you to William and Mary College.

You will have to depend upon yourself. as well as help your younger brothers and sister."

This was no hardship to George, for he loved them dearly, and he was none too fond of books. At the school across the river he did fairly well with his arithmetic, but disliked grammar greatly, and he was, all his life, but a poor speller. Yet he was able to make his meaning plain, and some of his words, like his farewell address to his officers, are models to this day.

After his father's death, and in the absence of his elder half-brothers on their own plantations, Ferry Farm soon began to show the need of a man's care. George and his younger brothers suffered the disadvantage which always comes to a child who has too much freedom. Real freedom always begins with self-control, and few boys learn to control themselves except through discipline from others.

George was of an age and nature to need proper training and guidance. He delighted to slip away from old Peter, the negro slave who was supposed to look after him, steal off to the forbidden cabins of the field slaves and eat roasting ears, or to slip out at night, when everybody was asleep, and take the dogs for coon-hunts.

His mother was often nearly distracted as to what she ought to do for this tall and stirring son of hers. Many of the things he kept doing were part of the life of the rich young planters of that day, and she was ambitious that he might grow up to take a place with the best of these. Yet she knew that he did not have their wealth, and that he must, somehow, be trained to make his own way in the world. Sometimes she was too severe in her punishment, when his pranks were discovered, while at other times she was too easy and merely laughed.

She did not have a gift for order or discipline, although she loved George deeply. Ferry Farm ran down from bad to worse. Often the mother complained bitterly of her poverty and hardships as a widow, and sometimes of the fact that George's half-brothers were left by their father richer than either she or her children were. George helped his mother, however, work and plan for the others, contentedly and sensibly accepting his father's will, and trying to decide upon some career which would enable him to follow his love for outdoor life, of practical things, and which would provide a living.

He learned a great deal from old Peter, whom his father had greatly trusted, but he was allowed to do too much as he pleased. George's great strength and endurance constantly led him into danger, both while hunting and fishing. He soon discovered a certain pleasure in danger. In its presence both his body and his mind acted more quickly than usual. Like many who are large of body, his mind usually acted slowly. His companions, who were often smaller, were also often more quick-witted. His judgment, on the other hand, was generally better than theirs. But danger was like a tonic to him, all his life. And as a lad he often took undue risks.

His greatest joy was riding and training half-broken horses. Sampson, an old Mandingo slave, who was very black, had been in the family for many years. He had a rare ability to train and control animals of all kinds. Even bees, which are usually very hostile to negroes, would let him handle them at will.

The members of Sampson's tribe were all very sensitive, especially to anything like disgrace. They would often take their own lives if they felt that an injustice had been done

them. But they were faithful and capable servants when treated kindly. Sampson had charge, under the direction of the overseer, of the stables and the brood-mares. He trained the saddle-horses and broke young colts in to harness.

"I's never been whipped, Marse George," he once said. "I'd simply die if master raised his hand against me in anger."

This surprised George very much, for usually the slaves were whipped like children, and thought as little of it. It seemed odd to George, too, that Sampson lived happily as a slave, but said he could not live if he had been done an injustice, while George himself felt that he would rather be dead than not be free.

It was to this old negro slave Sampson that George owed much of the knowledge and training which made him so good a horseman. George was now around the stables much more than he had been allowed under his father's rule. He did much as he wished outside of school hours. One Saturday morning he made one of the grooms saddle a fine hunting-horse, and rode off to a meeting for a fox-hunt four miles from home.

He was so small and so young that the members of the gentry who had gathered for the hunt were greatly amused to see him.

"Does that horse know there's any one on his back?" they shouted.

"Can you stay on?" others asked.

But the horse knew its business better than George, and carried him safely through the chase. After he had seen two foxes killed, George started home in triumph from his first chase.

On the way home the hunter stumbled on a rock and lamed a foot. George dismounted and led him.

When he reached home and went to the stable, he found the overseer, with a whip in his hand, swearing at Sampson and about to beat him for letting the hunter out of the stable. When the overseer saw that the horse was lame he was more angry than ever.

"That hunter was ready to be sold at Williamsburg. Look at him now!" he cried angrily, starting after Sampson again.

George slipped behind him and snatched the whip from his hand.

"I'm the one to blame, and no one else," cried George, when the overseer turned upon him. "You'll have to whip me before you whip Sampson."

The overseer, angry as he was, did not quite dare whip his young master.

"Your mother shall say who is to be whipped," he said sullenly.

But whether he never told her, or for some other reason of her own, Mary Washington never said who was to be whipped.

"You'se like your father, Marse George," said Sampson. "He used to get pale that-a-way when he was riled. But you mus' never get mad at a horse an' strike him."

George's two half-brothers visited the family soon after this. Both felt that George was being spoiled by lack of guidance and discipline. After some objection on his mother's part, it was determined that George should go back to the plantation at Wakefield, where he was born, now the home of his brother Augustine. There was a better school near, and he would have better training in every way. So George spent many months on the plantation at Wakefield very happily, riding home every few weeks to spend Sunday with his mother and the younger children.

Pope's Creek, on this Virginia plantation, where the tide from Chesapeake Bay rushes up the Potomac at flood and out at ebb, was full of oysters, clams, crabs, and fish. One of the negro slaves, who had been named Appleby after the English school which Captain Washington and his two older sons had attended, had charge of the fishing, and George spent much time with him, learning more and more of the ways of forest and stream. The families along the river visited back and forth in rowboats, and George found many pleasant companions.

"Some day the bottom of Chesapeake Bay will be a richer mine than brother Lawrence's iron-mine, on account of the oysters," said Augustine one day.

In the spring they took thousands of shad from the river, putting on the land for fertilizer what they did not need for food. Often George went off hunting duck with his half-brother, lying concealed under the hiding-places at dawn while Augustine shot the ducks, geese, and swans that flew in dense flocks over the islands of Pope's Creek.

George prospered in this hardy life, becoming a strong, sturdy lad, able to endure. He cared little either for the violin which Augustine played or for the songs his wife sang. Nor did he care greatly for the books, of which there was a larger supply than in the homes of most of the planters. But he benefited from the home life in many ways, imitating, as boys will, the courteous, mild-spoken elder half-brother, who was a gentle and considerate master to his slaves and a good citizen and neighbor.

Mary Washington had many acres of land but little ready money. George inherited his strong will and his power to govern from her. After the respectful manner of the time, he always addressed her in his letters as "Honored Madam" and signed himself "Your dutiful son." One of

George's companions, speaking of the awe Mary Washington inspired, says: "We were all as mute as mice when in her presence." If George was presented to any one, he had to

If George was presented to any one, he had to bow very low, then hold his hat under his arm or by his side.

bow very low, then hold his hat under his arm or by his side. A young lady would courtesy very low also. He learned that stately dignity which later became one of his greatest charms.

CHAPTER III

THE KING'S UNIFORM

LATER SCHOOL-DAYS—SEEKING A CAREER—THE SEA-CHEST IS PACKED—A WAITING MAN-OF-WAR—THE UNIFORM OF A MIDSHIPMAN—A MOTHER'S TEARS AND PLEA—THE RIGHT CHOICE

George was at this time about thirteen years old. He was overgrown, thin, a little round-shouldered, and very shy with the girls, much as thousands of boys have been since. All his life, indeed, he got along better with men, being always rather backward when ladies were present. He would at any time rather face a battery than a pair of bright, laughing, girlish eyes.

At Wakefield, in the home of his half-brother Augustine, he found many of the things needed by a lad of spirit. There was first a fine stable of thirty horses, and he had one of them for his own, to gallop to and from his school, four miles away. There were abundant outdoor sports, of which he was fond, and boys of his own age. Among these he soon became a leader, as he had been at his former school. He was often chosen to settle the disputes between the boys, acting as umpire in their quarrels. He could run, climb, and throw better than any of them.

Fortunately, he was given studies that he liked. He was particularly happy when carrying the chain for his teacher's class in surveying as they measured the meadows along Bridge's Creek. To find how his arithmetic helped his surveying pleased him. He learned Gunter's rule for surveying, and this work well suited the practical side of his nature. All his life George liked to learn how to do things, and doing

them well, so as to reach practical results, always pleased him.

His schoolmaster gave George a book which he kept all his life, and which may still be seen. It was called "The Young Man's Companion," and was a collection of information something like the "Boy Scout Handbook." It contained all manner of problems in practical arithmetic, as well as methods of writing deeds and other information needed by a woodman or a surveyor.

There was also a set of Rules of Conduct. Washington learned early that a good rule was a statement of the easiest and best way of doing a thing. So he copied a number of these rules in his copy-book, where they may be seen to this day, in his large bold hand, with the queer letters and some of the bad spelling, for the encouragement of other boys like him. This is one of the rules:

Labour to keep alive in your Breast that Little Spark of Celestial fire called Conscience.

George spent over a year very happily and profitably at Wakefield, working upon his surveying lessons, playing the games he loved, or hunting and fishing with his sturdy, good-natured half-brother Augustine, whom he admired greatly and began to imitate.

In the large family of a widow there is almost always double training. Part of the time the mother is trying to find what is best for each particular child. Often she is forced to face that sacrifice which must be made by each for the family as a whole. It is this double training which has so often made the eldest son of a widow a good and great man.

Widow Washington had a heart bursting with ambition for this tall, manly son of hers. She knew perfectly that he

had great ability, which would make him a good strong man if he might only receive the right training. Down in her heart she knew that his life would be wrecked without this training. So she was constantly torn between a desire to have him with her, where he could help and counsel both her and the younger children, and a desire to have him go where he would be getting what was most needed for himself.

After George had been at Wakefield over a year she was able to endure his absence no longer, and it was decided that he should return to Ferry Farm, going to school at Fredericksburg, across the river.

While in school here, George met two boys named Crawford, who later became famous Indian fighters and pioneers. These boys furnished the stirring rivalry in sport that George needed, and they all learned rapidly from their games on field and stream. George had unusually large, powerful hands. The Crawford boys taught him a trick grip which he was able to use to good effect later. In fact, George very early learned what Abe Lincoln also learned when he was a boy, to get ready and the chance would come. One day, years afterward, but while Washington was still a young man, he was visiting an Indian village. There was a chief named Big Bear who delighted to grasp the hands of white men when he met them and squeeze so tightly as to almost crush the bones, watching, with glee, his victim writhe in torture. George had been warned of this trick. So he gripped the chief's hand first in the trick clutch he had learned, and solemnly watched the Indian twist about in agony, to the great delight of the spectators. So the Indians called George "Big Hand."

George soon began to take himself more seriously than was customary with boys of his age. Partly due to his

modesty and shyness, he was all his life regarded as grave and reserved. His two half-brothers would gladly have shared their fortunes with him, and allowed him the opportunity to live like the young men of his time. But this was an idle life, and George, since his father's death, had felt the beginning of a certain manly responsibility as the head of his mother's family. He could not be contented to seek his own comfort and enjoyment and leave his mother to struggle on alone with the younger children. Even then he instinctively preferred to be a self-supporting American rather than to be a rich Virginia planter who modelled his life after the habits of the families of noblemen in England. George, early and constantly, when he came to the forks of the road, picked out the path which led to reliance and mother-wit instead of the one which merely tried to copy, in entirely different surroundings, the manners of the mother country. He was an early volunteer in that famous group of Americans, of which he was the first and foremost, and which extends in an unbroken line down to Roosevelt—those good scouts, gentlemen unafraid, who stand ever ready to have their bodies suffer for their soul's desire.

The choice of a career is nearly always hard for a boy. Shall he try with all his might to do the thing his heart craves? Or shall he try to do only the things he is or may become able to do? Or shall he do only the things his fellow men want done, and will deem worthy of reward in the coin of the realm in which he works?

It was a harder choice for George Washington in his day than it is for boys now. For many of the paths have been well blazed since he lived. At that time there was a distinct difference between the gentry, especially in Virginia, who

owned large estates, living upon them something after the manner of their English ancestors, and the tradesmen or workmen. It was not usual for a Virginia gentleman to work with his hands or to receive day's wages.

George's mother had all of a mother's desire to have her eldest son occupy as high a place in the community and in the esteem of his neighbors as his half-brothers, who were connected by blood and marriage with the famous First Families of Virginia. But George had only inherited a moderate-sized farm from his father, and even this must, by his father's will, be held by his mother until he was of age. As a matter of fact, he never took the farm while his mother lived.

The subject of a career for George was up in many family councils, as has been the case in a widow's household from time immemorial. He enjoyed most his work as a surveyor, and this seemed to offer him a life out-of-doors, full of the adventure he so dearly loved. The constant solving of new problems, and meeting new people, as well as the opportunity for a useful, independent, and profitable career attracted him.

George was not yet old enough to enter the army, but he was over fourteen, old enough to enter the navy as a midshipman. His half-brother Lawrence made a suggestion which for a time won George's heart completely. Lawrence so greatly admired Admiral Vernon, with whom he had served, that he had changed the name of his own estate from Hunting Creek to Mount Vernon in honor of the English sailor. He was also acquainted with many of the other high naval officials of England.

Lawrence said to George:

"I believe I may be able to secure for you an appoint-

ment as a midshipman in the British navy. With your foot on this ladder you ought to be able to climb high."

George had heard from Lawrence many of the tales of his adventures in war on land and sea. The voice of the ocean called strongly to him, as it has to almost every lad of spirit who loves adventure since Columbus. So George and Lawrence hurried over to Ferry Farm and eagerly explained to the widowed mother the great chances for fame and fortune that might follow if George could only secure an appointment as midshipman. And she, mother-like, captured at first by the possible chance for her boy, smothered down her fears for his safety in storm and battle. She brushed aside for the time the feeling of loneliness that swept her heart at the thought of his absence. With a woman's self-sacrificing spirit, she prepared to take the burden of home and young children back again on her own shoulders, instead of looking forward to shifting part of the load gradually on to the broad shoulders of her growing son. She gave at last a tearful consent.

George and Lawrence, surprised and elated at winning her permission, were so carried away with their own vision of the glory and honor ahead that they failed to note her tears. They returned to Mount Vernon, Lawrence wrote the necessary letters to the British admiralty, and George began watching eagerly for a reply.

No sooner had they gone, however, than Widow Washington's fears began to get the better of her. She felt that she would probably never see her son again. She would certainly be deprived of all the aid and comfort she had expected from him in the care of the farm and the younger children. But she was too proud to take back her word without reason. So she wrote to her brother, Joseph Ball,

a London lawyer, telling him of her trouble and asking his advice.

It would be six months before a reply could be expected, so she waited, between hope and fear, for something to save her from lifelong separation and a broken heart.

Lawrence ordered a suitable uniform made.

Meantime, George also waited impatiently. The six months were trying ones for both mother and son. George thought at times that he could never bear the suspense. But during all this time he was unusually kind and dutiful to his mother. For, young as he was, he saw the anguish in her eyes and noticed the first streaks of gray in her hair. Then he would tell her of his hopes of a career that would bring honor to them both.

After many weary months a reply came saying the appointment would be made. Lawrence ordered a suitable uniform made, and the little sea-chest containing George's outfit was sent aboard the *Bellona*, a British man-of-war that was lying at anchor in the Potomac below Mount Vernon.

George always took pride in being properly dressed, and had examined the king's uniform with all a boy's eagerness. He put it on one day and appeared before his mother and the family, radiant in his sailor garb. He drew himself up to his full height and marched about the room, his blue-gray eyes flashing with pride and anticipation. But his mother was pale and quiet.

"My outfit is all aboard the *Bellona*. My appointment has come from Admiral Vernon, and I am to join in a month," he said.

"Will you read this letter which has just come from your uncle in London?" asked his mother.

George took the letter and read:

I understand you have some thought of putting your son George to sea. I think he had better be put apprentice to a tinker, for a common sailor, before the mast, has no means the common liberty of the subject; for they will press him from a ship where he has fifty shillings a month and make him take twenty-three, and cut and slash and use him like a negro, or rather like a dog.

"Uncle does not understand," cried George hastily. "I am not to go as a common sailor, but as a midshipman, in training to become an officer of the king."

"Your uncle is a lawyer and a man of experience in the world. He knows better than you or even I do what would be best for you."

"He does not know better than Lawrence, who has been an officer," persisted George stoutly.

Mother and son faced each other quietly but steadily. George turned white, as he was apt to do when deeply moved. There was a spot of red in his mother's cheeks.

"Your brother did what he thought was best. But I can never give my consent," said his mother.

"I am sorry to hear you say that," said George.

Each was pale but determined.

"Do you intend to follow my wishes?" asked the mother.

"I think I am in honor bound to accept the appointment Lawrence has secured through Admiral Vernon. I will never discredit you."

"You refuse, then?"

"Mother, I must!"

His mother said no more, but turned away from him. He heard the sound of her sobs. He had seen tears in her eyes before, but had never seen her so deeply moved.

Suddenly she turned to him and stretched out her arms.

"George, my son, do not break my heart by leaving me. You must know how hard it is for me to beg of you, but I implore you to give up the sea."

George stood silently before her, awed by the storm of emotion that had overcome her. She had always been calm and self-contained throughout the many great troubles of her life. It had always been hard for him to face even the laughing eyes of a woman. Tears were worse. He knew that he was at the crossing of the roads, that he must choose either the king's uniform or his mother's peace and comfort. Through the tears he sensed the strong mother-love for him, and for him alone. He loved the sea, and the king's service appealed to him, but he knew that he would never be able to be happy with the memory of his mother's

tears before him, with her broken-hearted sobs ringing in his ears.

"Mother, I will give up my commission," he cried, and rushed from the room.

Once alone, he burst into tears as he thought of the chest on board the *Bellona*, lying there at anchor in the Potomac, of his eager hopes for a career as a great sailor, of the chance to visit many lands, of the brave adventures. But, unreasonable as it all was, he could never go away and leave his mother in tears like that. So he rushed off to the stables, saddled his horse, and rode away at a great pace.

His brother Lawrence was provoked, especially after the pains he had taken in the matter. But he consoled George.

"There are many roads in life. Only one has been barred," he said.

So the little midshipman's trunk was sent for and the bright uniform folded and laid away. George wore many uniforms during his life—that of a scout on many a trail; the bright-red uniform of the king while with General Braddock; the buff and blue of an American general—but none of them ever quite made up for the disappointment of not being able to wear that of a midshipman. However, even as a lad, as all through his life, he had an unwillingness to brood over a thing, once it was settled. So he gradually jolted off his trouble by a horseback ride. But for days he would talk to no one of the matter.

The man-of-war *Bellona* sailed down the broad Potomac at last, leaving on shore the lad who had chosen the path that was hard but right. No one can tell to what career that man-of-war might have carried him, nor what changes

might have been made in his own and in his country's history, had he at this time donned the uniform of the king. But he had taken the first step upward on the ladder that made him a man. And no real man climbs upward through a mother's tears.

CHAPTER IV

A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD WORLD

LORD FAIRFAX OF GREENWAY COURT—LIFE IN THE FIRST FAMILIES OF ENGLAND AND OF VIRGINIA—THE MODEL OF A MAN—SOLDIERS AND SCOUTS—A YOUNG SURVEYOR—THE WAYS OF THE INDIAN—A STERLING LAD—FIRST LESSONS IN WAR

Though the death of his father was a great loss to him, George was fortunate in finding a welcome in four homes. First, of course, was his mother's, in which as eldest son he early came to feel the responsibility as the helper who would one day be its head. Then there was his half-brother Augustine's home at Wakefield, whose mistress used to laugh good-naturedly at the way the lad imitated her husband. There he found many profitable companions. He spent much of his time, too, at Mount Vernon, with his half-brother Lawrence and his wife, both of whom were fond of the lad. The Virginians have ever been proud of their old families. One of the oldest and best of these was the family of Lawrence's wife—the Fairfax family.

The head of the family in Virginia was Thomas, the sixth Lord Fairfax, descendant of the great Lord Fairfax who fought with Cromwell. He was a scholar, a writer, a famous soldier, and a noble gentleman. He owned nearly one-sixth of the present State of Virginia, it having been given, after the manner of the time, by King Charles II of England to his grandfather.

On one of the most beautiful portions of his lands, in the Shenandoah Valley, called by the Indians the Daughter of the Stars, Lord Fairfax intended to build at Greenway Court a home after the style of a great English estate. He had been a leader in English society, was a friend of

Addison and Steele, and had written articles for that famous paper *The Spectator*. It was said that he had been betrothed to a lady of great beauty and high rank, but that, after all the preparations for the wedding had been made she forsook him for another nobleman of still higher rank.

Lord Fairfax, furious and humiliated, forsook English society and sailed for Virginia, carrying in his heart until his death a distrust and hatred of womankind.

When he first saw George Washington, then a lad of fifteen, Lord Fairfax pronounced him a too sober little prig, and this he no doubt appeared to be. But later, when the lad's shyness had been overcome, Lord Fairfax began to show such interest in him as was flattering both to the pride of George and of his family.

Lord Fairfax was at this time tall, thin, very ruddy of countenance, and near-sighted. His great estates in Virginia were in charge of his cousin William, whose daughter Anne had married Lawrence Washington, and whose son, George William Fairfax, was a friend and companion of George Washington's for many years. At Belvoir, the home of William Fairfax, as well as at Greenway Court, the home of Lord Fairfax, Washington learned much that was best from the life of the old families of Virginia and of England. George was naturally pleased with the notice Lord Fairfax, the only nobleman he had ever seen, took of him.

"Your fondness for surveying may become of great service to you in time," said Lord Fairfax to George one day. "It is a noble business, because you have to be truthful, because it keeps you away from men,—and especially from women!"

George did not understand at the time what he meant, and did not deem it proper to inquire.

Lord Fairfax was a silent man, and in this George resembled him. But often, after they had been hunting, and had ridden home after an exciting chase, he would light his pipe and sit before the fire telling stories to the sturdy young American of his old days at Oxford, of meeting royalty, of dining with Addison, then the greatest writer of England. And he guided the youth's reading, and gave him opportunities, from time to time, which, when George had taken advantage of them, led on to greater things.

Virginia has never lost the art of rearing great men. It has always been done by the constant association and comradeship between lads of spirit and their noble elders. The company of the Fairfax family and of his half-brothers was always of great value to George. William Fairfax was also a man of great honor and uprightness, and was very courteous. He often told George of his adventures in the king's service in both the East and the West Indies as well as of his success in clearing the pirates out of New Providence. He had been collector of customs many years in New England, and had married a lady from Salem, Mass.

"Our planters usually despise the men of the North as mere traders and Puritans," he told George one day. "On the other hand, they consider us mostly godless, drunken, fox-hunting squires. On this account there are many jealousies and misunderstandings, which will one day cause serious trouble."

George remembered his words often, while, during the Revolution, he was trying to induce North and South to work together for the good of all.

He learned many things from many men during these days; from Lord Fairfax about the great world across the sea; from his brother Lawrence, and from William Fairfax,

about the life of officers and men in war; from the pioneer scouts; from the surveyor who taught him the practice of field surveying and the drawing necessary to make a map.

Lord Fairfax encouraged him more and more to make practical use of his lessons in surveying. At sixteen, Washington was almost six feet tall, but rather spare, not yet filled out. He was well shaped, active, with unusually long arms and uncommon strength. His light brown hair was drawn back from a broad forehead, with an open, manly face, a square, massive jaw, grayish-blue eyes, and an expression of calmness and strength; in all, as fine a specimen of an upstanding American as one would wish to see.

But the strong, alert, well-trained body was not all. Gilbert Stuart, the painter whose business it was to study faces in order to portray truly the soul that shines through the eyes, and who painted the best of the portraits of Washington, said that he never saw in any man such large eye-sockets, nor such breadth of nose and forehead between the the eyes, and that he read there the evidence of the strongest passions possible to human nature. And Lafayette once enthusiastically said: "I thought then and now that never had I beheld so superb a man."

It is little wonder, then, that Lord Fairfax was interested in the handsome, athletic lad, so well thought of by all those who knew him; that he found George so stanch a companion and realized what a wonderful man he might become. The hot blood was pulsing in his veins. His heart beat high with hope and ambition. The iron will and masterful passions were slowly developing.

Although he was only sixteen, George was given an opportunity to join a surveying party, consisting of his young friend George William Fairfax, his old master in sur-

veying, James Genn, and two servants. George had the ague when they started, and was feeling miserable, but the horseback riding soon helped him and in a day or so he was able to stop taking the bitter Jesuit's bark medicine.

It is little wonder, then, that Lord Fairfax was interested in the handsome, athletic lad.

"You are to locate the land, and survey it," said Lord Fairfax in his orders. "Settle its boundaries, note down the roads and highways, and report to me about the people who have settled themselves on my land, without leave.

They must be either driven off or satisfactorily arranged with. You may have plenty of adventures, too. Land surveying has quite as many risks as a sailor's life."

George was out with the surveying party six weeks. There is probably no occupation which unites the adventures of outdoor life, the practical use of school studies, and experience with all kinds of people so well as surveying in a new country. One of the most remarkable and interesting things about the life of Washington, and one which gives it the greatest value to all good scouts everywhere, was the way in which one opportunity, successfully met, led almost immediately to a greater opportunity, to meet which the first gave the required experience and training.

The idea of receiving daily wages was not pleasant to many Virginians of his class, but George found the fact that he was earning four and sometimes six pistoles a day made him feel independent and of value both to himself and to others. The work was without danger, except from the rattlesnakes. He rapidly learned the first duty of a scout or a soldier, the ability to take care of himself in any weather, under any conditions.

After one night in the cabin of a Dutch settler, lying in the blankets infested with vermin, or trying to sleep on a straw bed, or on the skin couches upon which were man, wife, and squalling babies, huddled together like cats and dogs, casting lots for the place nearest the fire, George decided he liked a bearskin in the open air better.

Once they met a party of Indians on the war-path. But there were no real hardships, and much pleasure hunting game, especially wild turkeys. The snows were still melting and the roads were the worst that could be found, even in Virginia. They crossed Ashby's Gap in the Blue

Ridge, into the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Washington noticed the richness of these valleys, learned the qualities of the soil in different places, studied the great trees and their value, and wondered that the Indians should have so much good invention in their names, like Shenandoah, the Daughter of the Stars. He learned by observation and experience, just as every scout does, how to cook, how to make a comfortable camp, even in rain or cold, and that education of the woods which is in many ways more valuable and more pleasant than any to be found in books.

All this was very profitable to him in later years, not only in training him for war, but in enabling him first to earn money, then to wisely invest it in lands, and finally to manage his estates well.

The Indians interested George much more than the Dutch settlers. Genn knew a little of their language and more of the sign language which serves instead of talk between Indians everywhere. This sign language pleased Lord Fairfax greatly.

"You cannot talk too much in signs, or easily abuse your neighbor," he said.

But George found that the Indians had a sign for cutting a man's throat. which was worse than abuse.

So well was this first task done that Lord Fairfax gave George employment for the next three years, surveying and laying out land in the Shenandoah Valley and along the Potomac river.

When George was but seventeen, Lord Fairfax and his brothers secured for him the position as surveyor of the county of Culpeper. In the records of Culpeper courthouse may still be seen an entry certifying that George Washington, gentleman, produced a commission from the

president and masters of William and Mary College, appointing him to be surveyor of the county, whereupon he took the oath to his majesty's person and government.

To this day his surveys have stood unquestioned, and old lawyers were accustomed to say that the only old-time surveys in Virginia that could be depended upon as correct were those of George Washington, just as, in later years, his brand on a barrel of flour brought a higher price for it, even in London.

Thus, he was laying a foundation in health, decision, and strength. The rough life in the forest gave him confidence, made him watchful and cautious, gave him the resourcefulness of the pioneer scout, taught him how to deal with all kinds of people, studying the ways of men, and teaching him how to act toward them.

When he was nineteen, George Washington was one of the manliest, stoutest, and handsomest young men in Virginia. Lord Fairfax watched him grow. They hunted together, when George was not off surveying, and engaged in all the rough sports and perilous games of Virginia life of that day. The youth's fine temper, good horsemanship, and love of outdoor sport enlisted the warm and affectionate regard of the old nobleman. He saw, too, higher qualities, courage, rugged common sense, and, more important even than these, a strong will, coupled with a fine sterling character. He knew how good men were made from promising lads in England. He believed that good men could be made from the same material, by the same method, in America. He saw in Washington, not merely a brave, manly lad whom he was glad to help, but the making of a truly great man. So he trusted Washington with more and more important duties on his great estates.

On winter nights there would gather, in his home at Greenway Court, young hunters and trappers or fur-traders to share the famous Virginia hospitality, which never failed. Christopher Gist, the scout, was often there. Washington would listen quietly to the others, learning more and more of the life of the woods. Gist was a good story-teller. Washington always kept full diaries and journals of all his surveys, and from these Lord Fairfax often read as they sat around the fire and smoked.

"George is a brave boy," said the nobleman, after finishing reading one of Washington's diaries one evening. "It is hardship that makes men. A man's power in life is in proportion to the resistance he meets when he is young. George will become a strong man one day."

So he was busily and profitably employed, because it was known that, though young, his work was correct, and that he could not be bribed to do wrong.

Lord Fairfax intended to build a great mansion, but he never did so. Instead, he enlarged and improved Greenway Court, at White Post, seven miles from Winchester, Va. It was a long low stone building, with sloping roof. There were coops for the swallows, under the eaves, with a wide porch all around, and beyond, a forest of hickory and oak and tulip trees. There were outbuildings for the slaves, and kennels for the hounds which Lord Fairfax loved. There was a room, with a wide dormer window, which was always kept ready for Washington, and next it a room with more books than George had ever seen, except in the library of Colonel Byrd's mansion.

When not absent surveying, George spent many happy hours at Greenway Court, hunting and riding with Lord Fairfax. When the weather was bad he read the history of

England, and tried to please his lordship by reading Shakespeare and other books of verse of which Lord Fairfax was more fond than George. Sometimes he tried to lay out and plot verses, but he never found much pleasure in the use of the imagination, liking practical things better.

For days he would see nothing of the kind but eccentric Lord Fairfax, although usually he joined George at dinner, and then remained smoking or drinking his punch, and talking, sometimes bitterly, of the old days in England.

Often the woods about Greenway Court were lighted by the fires of the Indians and the traders and trappers who came constantly for food, which was never denied them. From all of these George learned of the ways of the savages. There came also the rude, lawless traders from Pennsylvania, with stories of the Indians and the French beyond the Ohio. These men foresaw a war along the frontiers. Their stories of the fertility of the wide valleys beyond the Ohio River made Washington anxious to explore that country. He learned that the French had already warned the fur-traders to leave the section and had driven away their hunters.

When he was still only nineteen, Washington was summoned to Williamsburg by Governor Dinwiddie. The health of his half-brother Lawrence had been failing. George had been recommended to the Governor by Lord Fairfax and by Lawrence himself for the commission as major in the militia which Lawrence had held, but was resigning.

"I have been advised," said the Governor, "to make you one of my adjutants, with the rank of major." And he gave George the appointment.

He proved himself, as usual, worthy of the trust, and set out at once, with his customary thoroughness, preparing

himself for his new duties. He got ready for the next chance—and it came quickly.

He had early learned the Indian manner of walking. Only the sharpest ears could detect his steps. The woods taught him silence. He was a sure shot, as graceful as a deer, knew the haunts and habits of animals, and learned every trick of the trail.

From Lawrence and some of his former military companions, George learned the manual of arms, borrowed books on military tactics and the art of war, and got some idea of the evolutions in the field. From Jacob Van Braam, a Dutch soldier of fortune, George learned sword exercises. Then he rode through the counties of his district learning how many men could be counted upon, and doing his best to stiffen the lax discipline of the militia.

When some one said to Lord Fairfax that George was too young to be appointed to so important a position the nobleman replied:

"You are mistaken as to his age. All the Washingtons are born old. George is about thirty in experience."

CHAPTER V

A HAZARDOUS MISSION

RIVAL CLAIMS—THE MESSAGE TO THE FRENCH—FRIENDS AT A CAMP-FIRE—A ROUGH TRAIL—AT THE FORKS OF THE OHIO—AN INDIAN COUNCIL—FRONTIER HOSPITALITY—A CONTEST BETWEEN WITS AND WINE—HARDSHIPS THAT MAKE MEN—A TREACHEROUS GUIDE—OUTWITTING AN INDIAN—A FORCED MARCH—RIVER AND RAFT—OVERBOARD IN THE ICY FLOOD—A LUCKY LANDING—A FAMOUS REPORT

The trouble between the English and the French over their American colonies and the country about the forks of the Ohio was approaching a crisis. The French explorers had come up the St. Lawrence River and had built fortifications on the Great Lakes, the Mississippi, and along the Gulf of Mexico. France claimed all the territory because of the discoveries of Joliet and Père Marquette.

The English had made a Puritan settlement in New England, a Cavalier settlement in Virginia, a Quaker settlement in Pennsylvania, and others. They based their claim to all the country west of the mountains and north of the Ohio on an alleged purchase from the Five Nations of Indians.

Both France and England were doing everything possible to strengthen their claims. The French, coming down from Canada, from one to the other of the chain of forts they established, made friends with the Indians, sending missionaries among them. Many of the early French pioneers intermarried and lived with the red men. Celeron de Bienville distributed presents among the Indians, made speeches reminding them of their former friendship with the French, and warned them not to trade with the English.

He nailed leaden plates to the trees and buried others in the ground at the Forks of the Ohio and on the other streams, stating that all the lands on both sides of the streams belonged to the King of France.

The Indians stood solemnly about, watching the placing of these plates.

"They mean to steal our country from us," they said. And they decided to seek aid and protection from the English.

Nor were the English entirely idle. England had granted to colonial trading companies "all the land from sea to sea." One of these, the Ohio Company, was organized for the purpose of trading with the Indians and the trappers. This company held a charter from the King of England granting certain rights along the Ohio River in what are now the State of West Virginia and southern Ohio. The French, coming down from Canada, interfered with these rights. The line of forts the French were erecting cut off the English on the west. The Indians in the disputed territory were induced to takes sides, part with the English and part with the French.

Lawrence Washington became president of the Ohio Company, in which Governor Dinwiddie and many of the wealthy Virginians were interested. The company sent Christopher Gist, the noted scout, to explore the country. He reported that beyond the Ohio were many rich, level valleys, covered with noble forests of hickory, walnut, ash, poplar, sugar maple, and wild cherry, with plains laden with wild rye, with meadows of blue grass and clover, in which buffaloes, thirty and forty at a time, were grazing as in a pasture.

"Deer, elk, and wild turkeys are abundant," reported Gist. "Nothing is wanted but cultivation to make this a

most delightful country. The Indians are anxious that I settle among them, and that we build a fort for mutual defense. They say that if the French claim the rivers which run into the lakes those which run into the Ohio belong to us and our brothers the English."

The trade in furs which the Ohio Company had been building up with the Indians and the trappers was being ruined by the notices and threats of the French. Something must be done. The French had launched an armed vessel of unusual size on Lake Ontario, fortified their trading-post at Niagara, and strengthened their other outposts.

A stir of warlike preparations ran through the English colonies, especially Virginia. Governor Dinwiddie sent Captain Trent with a notice to the French to leave the territory. But the captain, hearing that the Indian allies of the English had been defeated by the French, lost heart and came back to report without delivering his message.

It was necessary to find a messenger of more spirit, one who, in his day, could be depended upon to "carry a message to Garcia." In spite of his youth, for he was only twenty-one, but because of his courage, daring, and success in every undertaking thus far intrusted to him, Governor Dinwiddie chose Major George Washington.

"You will proceed to Logstown, meet our allies, the Indians, secure from them an escort and guides, push on until you find the French commander, deliver to him this sealed message, wait an answer during one week, and then return," ordered the governor.

The young major received his credentials October 31, 1753. Van Braam was assigned to him as French interpreter. He gathered his outfit of provisions, blankets, and guns at Alexandria, and other needed supplies at Win-

chester, and was joined near what is now Cumberland by Christopher Gist and Mr. Davidson, an Indian interpreter.

On the same day Lord Fairfax rode into camp and spent the night. It was raining, and at times snowing. Gist set up a lean-to, however, and Lord Fairfax and Washington sat, with their feet to the fire, talking late into the night, the nobleman smoking his pipe as usual.

The great trees towered above them. The men found some old well-dried birch logs and cast them onto the fire. The flames leaped up and the fire roared.

"See, George, how the shadows of the trees are dancing," cried the nobleman, right in the midst of their serious talk.

George and Lord Fairfax were as different in many ways as two men could be. George was thoroughly practical. He liked to stick to one line of thought or one subject until it was finished. The nobleman, equally serious at times, would suddenly stop in the midst of a sentence, as some fancy or bit of scenery caught his imagination.

"I have seen him stand for ten minutes, looking at a big tree, or stop when the hounds were in full cry, a thing most astonishing, and sit still in the saddle, looking down at a brook or up at a sunrise," said Washington once.

After he had been silent for some time, Lord Fairfax suddenly began asking George questions about his men, his plans, and his route.

"What are you going to do and say when you reach the French camp?" he asked.

Washington told him he was going to deliver a sealed letter from the governor, and wait for a reply, observing all he could in the mean time.

"I was not responsible, this time, for your appointment. The governor is a fool to send a boy on a man's errand," said Lord Fairfax.

George was himself of the same opinion, being all too conscious of his youth, his inexperience, and the difficulty of the task before him. But he was a soldier, and his only duty was to obey orders as best he could. And, as was his manner with the old nobleman, he made no reply.

At last Lord Fairfax filled his pipe again, and calling for a coal, lighted it, saying:

"Well, by George, George, you never were a boy, not since I knew you."

"But for your former influence this office would never have come to me," said George.

To this the nobleman at first made no reply. Finally he said:

"Distrust every Indian, especially the one they call the Half-King, not because he is treacherous, but he is so uncertain, which is almost as bad. Trust, even less, every Frenchman. You are so young they will think you can be fooled easily."

"That may be an advantage. I mean to see all there is to be seen," replied George. "I have also told Van Braam to keep his eyes wide open."

His Lordship laughed.

"Well, be thankful there are no women in the business. Make up the fire for the night."

And they all lay down to sleep in the lean-to, watching, as an occasional tongue of flame lapped about the logs of the camp-fire, how it lit up the under side of the leaves, or sent dancing shadows among the trees. Washington lay awake for a long time thinking over his plans for the days that were to come and the counsel given him by the nobleman.

It rained and snowed almost daily, but Washington, like every good scout, trained himself constantly to endure cold

"Distrust every Indian, especially the one they call the Half-King."

or hunger and never to let them interfere with the task at hand. The streams were all swollen, so they had to swim their horses, an art Washington had learned. Van Braam, like a good soldier, enlivened the way with his songs and with stories of his adventures in war. They were all very tired and Washington's buckskin jacket was in tatters when they reached the point where Turtle Creek empties into the Monongahela River. Here they were joined by Frazier, a trader whom the French had driven out of the Indian town of Venango.

In order to gain time, Washington borrowed two canoes and sent the baggage down the Monongahela to the Forks, where, joining the Allegheny, the two rivers form the Ohio, and set out on a bad trail overland to meet them there.

Washington reached the Forks of the Ohio before the canoes. His keen eyes at once seized upon the importance of the location. He spent some time in viewing the rivers, and here, as at Valley Forge and at Mount Vernon, any boy may to-day walk in the very footsteps of the Father of his Country.

"The land at the Point," wrote Washington in his Journal, "is twenty-five feet above the common surface of the water, and a considerable bottom of flat, well-timbered land all around it, very convenient for building. The land in the Fork, which I think extremely well situated for a fort, has the absolute command of both rivers. The rivers are each a quarter of a mile across, and run here very nearly at right angles. The former of these is a very rapid and swift-running water, the other deep and still."

The wisdom of this early decision as to the value of the location is shown by the facts that the French later built Fort Duquesne on this spot; that the English, after two

unsuccessful attempts to capture it, succeeded the third time and built Fort Pitt; that the great city of Pittsburgh, with its hundreds of mills and factories, grew on the banks of the three rivers; and that, during the World War, when it was determined to build a munition plant which should be greater even than that of Krupp, the United States Government chose Neville Island, in the Ohio River, just below the Forks, in the valley where Washington and the Indians met so often, as the location. And, had the World War continued, the spirit of Washington would have added strength to the steel of Pittsburgh.

On the rise of ground at the Forks, Washington made his camp. The Ohio Company had intended to build a fort about two miles from this point, but Washington gave the Forks his decided preference, and his advice at last prevailed. In the neighborhood Shingiss, king of the Delaware Indians, lived, and Washington at once visited him, inviting him to join in the council at Logstown, fifteen miles down the Ohio. Shingiss was one of the greatest warriors of his tribe, and later took up the war hatchet many times against the English. Just at this time he seemed friendly, however, and accepted Washington's invitation.

"I can tell by their faces how the Indians feel toward us," said Gist.

"Their faces tell me nothing. They are not like the faces of white men," said Washington.

They reached Logstown at last after sundown November 24. The Half-King was at his hunting lodge about fifteen miles away on Beaver Creek, but Washington sent Indian runners to invite him and all his chiefs to a grand talk the following day.

In the morning four French deserters came into the Indian village. From them Washington learned of the

French fort at New Orleans, of the forts along the Mississippi and at the mouth of the Wabash, by which they kept in communication with the lakes, and he set this all carefully down in his journal. In the afternoon the Half-King arrived and Washington had a private talk with him in his tent, through Davidson, the Indian interpreter, before the meeting of the general council.

The Half-King was very angry at the French claims. He drew on birch bark, with a piece of charcoal, plans of the two forts the French had built, one on Lake Erie and the other on French Creek, near where Cambridge Springs now stands. Washington found that the Half-King was much more interested in holding his land for his own people than in the claims of either the English or French king. When the actions of the French were mentioned he was at once angry and eager to help the English against them. The French commander would be found at one of the French forts. The nearest way was impassable, being through large and miry swamps. They would have to go by way of Venango and it would take five or six sleeps, the Indians said, to reach the nearest fort.

Next morning there was a great council in the council house. Washington said:

"I have been sent by your brother the Governor of Virginia to deliver to the French commandant a letter of great importance, both to your brothers the English and to yourselves. I wish to ask your advice and assistance, and some of your young men to accompany me and provide for me on my way, and be my safeguard against the French Indians who have taken up the hatchet."

Then he presented them, in accordance with the Indian ceremony, with a string of wampum.

The chiefs sat silent for some moments, considering

what had been said, and giving Washington a chance to say more.

Then the Half-King rose and spoke as follows:

"The English are our brothers. We are one people. We will return to the French the wampums they have sent, for they are not our friends. In three days an escort will be provided, in token of the love and loyalty of the tribes."

At last they set out, but so cold and wet was the weather and so hard the travelling that it took five days to cover the seventy miles to Venango. Washington and his party rode at last into the clearing the French had made about the big log house out of which they had driven John Frazier, the trader and gunsmith. They found the French colors flying overhead.

"Where is the commandant?" asked Washington.

"He has command of the Ohio," replied one of them, Captain Joncaire, the veteran intriguer of the frontier.

"I have an important letter for him from the Governor of Virginia," continued Washington.

"You will find a general officer at the next fort. I would advise you to apply to him for a reply. Meantime we shall be glad to have your party join us at supper at headquarters."

Hospitality was never wanting in the wilderness. Food was as easily secured and as plenty as news and companionship were scarce. So it proved a jovial party. According to the custom of that time and of their people, Joncaire and his brother officers passed the bottle briskly about the table.

Washington, though young, was doubly cautious, but Van Braam drank as freely as the Frenchmen. It was the old, old story of wine beguiling the tongue.

"The wine," wrote Washington in his Journal, "as they dosed themselves plentifully with it, soon banished the restraint which at first appeared in their conversation and

But so cold and wet was the weather and so hard the travelling that it took five days to cover the seventy miles to Venango.

gave a license to their tongues to reveal their sentiments more freely. They told me that it was their absolute design to take possession of the Ohio, and they would do it; for that, although they were sensible that the English could raise two men for their one, yet they knew their motions

were too slow and dilatory to prevent any undertaking. They pretend to have an undoubted right to the river from a discovery made by one La Salle sixty years ago, and this expedition is to prevent our settling on the river or the waters of it."

Washington retained his sobriety and composure throughout the evening, leaving the task of pledging the Frenchmen to Van Braam, who was not a man to flinch from drink. Washington took careful notes of all he heard and learned.

His youth, along with his self-control, was an advantage to him. Amid all the noise and the smoke, which nearly choked Washington, Van Braam told him now and then what the Frenchmen were saying. Joncaire found the Half-King, whom Washington had hid away in a camp he had made in the woods at a distance; loaded the poor savage with gifts, and filled him with rum.

Washington was glad to get away, but much against his will Joncaire sent along with him one of his officers, La Force, as great a lover of mischief as could be found.

"This fellow," said Washington, "was the leanest man I ever saw, and saddle-colored. When he spoke to me he stared constantly, which is as unpleasant as to avoid entirely to meet a man's gaze. He made no end of trouble, and later had his reward, and perhaps more punishment than he deserved."

Four days later, very tired, Washington reached the fort at French Creek, where he found the commandant, Legardeur de St. Pierre, a chevalier of St. Louis. He was an old soldier, tall and straight, and gray, and had lost one eye in battle. He had all the courtesy of his people, was frank and outspoken, with brisk, pleasant ways. He had met Lord Fairfax in Paris many years before and desired to be re-

membered to him. By good fortune he spoke English enough to make himself understood. In the days which Washington spent very agreeably in his company he made no attempt at deceit, but made it plain that he intended to hold the country for the King of France.

Like most old soldiers he was fond of talking of his former campaigns, and Washington, as usual, listened profitably to all he said. St. Pierre and his officers talked lightly of women, and in a manner that the gentlemen of Virginia always avoided. He told Washington that the French encouraged their soldiers to take wives among the young Indian squaws, a thing the English never were inclined to do. He treated Washington to unlimited politeness and the Half-King to unlimited rum.

He had known many English gentlemen while he was in Paris and was ready to tell Washington why Lord Fairfax left England, if George had been inclined to listen, but he was not.

"I liked him, and found him a gallant gentleman, only eager to serve his king, as I was to serve mine," said Washington later.

The chevalier held a council of his officers and after two days handed Washington a sealed reply to the governor's letter.

"I was left free to inspect the fort and count the canoes made ready for use in the spring. They seemed careless as to what I saw. There were many Indians and French and half-breeds coming and going, with much ceremony, when we came in and went out," wrote Washington in his Journal, adding a description of the fort.

Washington was now ready to return, but, despite the polite ways of the commandant, there were constant delays about guides and supplies. This was to gain time to win

the Half-King, who was on the English side one day and the French the next.

"Never in my life did I suffer as much anxiety as I did in this affair. The Half-King being half drunk assured me the commandant was keeping him. That officer swore he was ignorant why we did not go. But this I determined not to do without the Half-King. One day a gun was promised the Indian. The next all my Indians were dead drunk. I was in despair, for to lose the Half-King would be a serious affair, and I was determined not to fail. But here I was, a lad of twenty-one, playing a game with old keen men for the prize of a drunken Indian," said Washington later.

Finally Gist succeeded in keeping the Half-King sober a day, yet content with promises of great gifts, and on the 16th of December Washington gladly started down French Creek in the birch canoes. A cannon was fired, and the officers, assembled on shore, saluted as Washington and his party left the fort. The commandant sent one canoe along loaded with strong liquor to be used on the way to Venango.

Washington, Gist, Van Braam, and Davidson were each seated comfortably in the middle of a birch-bark canoe, with Indians or half-breeds at the bow and stern. The water was very rapid most of the way and the Indians and guides used ash poles to hold and guide the canoes. Two days later, however, all the men were very uncomfortable. The ice was thick, and at places they all had to get out and wade, or to carry canoes and supplies over a portage. Four days after that they came to strong rapids, and Gist advised Washington to land and carry the canoes and provisions again. This they did, arriving below the rapids in time to see the French canoes descend, a fine sight. About halfway down the man in the bow of the canoe carrying the

liquor caught his pole between two rocks. He should have at once let go, but he did not, and the canoe swung across the stream, filled and turned over, so that all the brandy it carried was lost, to the great satisfaction of Washington. The men got out, with no great ease, swearing oaths, both French and Indian.

"It rained and froze, and, when we reached Venango, December 22, we were incased in ice like men in armor. I was never more glad of a fire," wrote Washington in his Journal.

Captain Joncaire again tried to win the Half-King with liquor, but luckily the Indian's stomach was much disordered by the brandy which St. Pierre had given him. Gist persuaded him that the French had bewitched the liquor, so the Half-King refused to drink more of it. Washington found his horses here, but they were very thin. After a rest they set out from Venango on Christmas Day over a bad trail.

"It was a horrible journey," wrote Washington. "The men got frozen feet, and the pack-horses failing, so that, in despair at the delay, against Gist's advice I left Van Braam to follow with the horses and the men, and determined to strike through the woods by compass for the Forks of the Ohio, and thus be enabled to report the sooner to the governor. For this venture Gist and I put on match-coats, Indian dress, thick socks, and moccasins. We carried packs, with my papers tied up in tanned skin, and as much provisions as we could manage. With our guns, and thus encumbered, we left the camp and struck out through the woods, where to move by compass is no easy matter, because to go straight is not possible, where every tree or bit of swamp must turn a man to this side or that. But by taking note of some great pine in front of us, and, on reach-

ing it of another, we made good progress, and for part of the way we had an Indian trail."

On the third day, in a deep snow, they reached the southeast fork of Beaver Creek.

"Here were a few Indians encamped, who seemed to expect us," wrote Washington. "How they could have done this I never knew; but there is much about Indian ways of communication of which I must confess myself ignorant."

The Indians were entirely too curious to please Gist. But it was midwinter, there were no trails, speed was urgent, and they could do no better, so they engaged an Indian as guide and to carry Washington's pack. Gist mistrusted the Indian, and Washington soon did the same.

They started at daybreak, but after ten miles were in doubt as to the route.

"I had one foot chafed and was the most tired I ever was in my life on account of plunging through snow-drifts," wrote Washington. "The Indian, on snow-shoes, was at ease. He offered to carry my gun, but I refused. When we said we would camp and rest he said the Ottawa Indians would see our fire smoke and surprise us. Once he said he heard whoops, then a gun, and kept turning northward, to our discontent. Notwithstanding my fatigue I found the silence and loneliness of these woods to my taste, being open and free of undergrowth. I was startled, at times, by the sharp crack, like a pistol shot, of huge limbs bursting with the frost; but there was no other sound. At last I declared that I must camp at the first brook we met. So we kept on, stumbling and ready to fall with fatigue."

Two miles farther on they came to an open glade, with warm sunlight, all the brighter for the white snow.

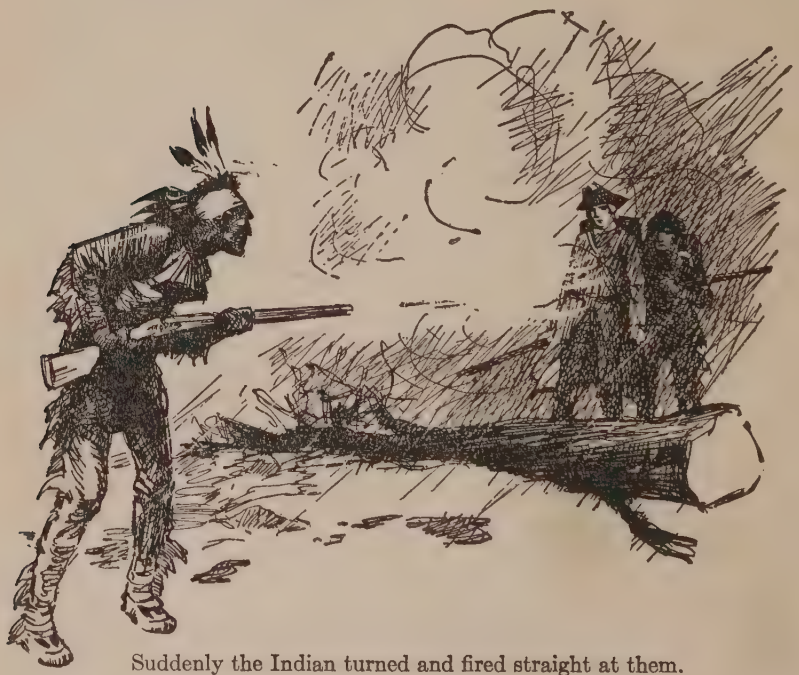
"Here is our stream. Let us camp," said Washington.

At this time he and Gist were near together, the Indian

some twenty paces away. Suddenly the Indian turned and fired straight at them.

"Are you shot?" Washington called to Gist.

"No," replied the scout.



Suddenly the Indian turned and fired straight at them.

Washington and Gist ran in on the Indian before he had time to load, seized him and took his gun. Gist wanted to kill the Indian at once, but this Washington would not permit. So they took his gun and made him march on ahead of them. Gist was greatly vexed, but Washington was unwilling to shoot a defenseless man.

"If we do not shoot him, which is the better way, we must fool him," said Gist.

At last it was agreed to pretend to believe his excuses as to the shooting being an accident, and to let him go to his cabin.

The Indian said he knew they would never trust him again, and was glad to be told that he might go home and get some jerked venison ready. They would camp that night, following his tracks in the snow in the morning. They gave him his gun, but took all his powder, gave him a cake of bread, and Gist followed him until he had gone a mile.

After Gist had returned, he and Washington tramped on rapidly for an hour, then built a log fire, and, as it was night, took by the light of the blaze a course, and set out, weary and sore as they were, leaving, to their great regret, the big warm fire behind them.

It was clear and very cold. All night long they pushed doggedly ahead, now and then making a light with flint and steel to see the compass, and trying to observe the stars. They were certain they would be pursued, so kept pushing on all the next day, dead tired and hardly speaking a word, until at dusk they came to the Allegheny River. Here they camped, but they were still fearful, because they were still within range of the Indians' rifles. So they got up at daybreak to push on.

The river was frozen out about sixty feet from each shore. The rushing water was full of floating cakes of ice. They must get over, and there was no way except to build a raft. They had only one hatchet, and that not very good, so they were all day building the raft, binding the logs together with grape-vines. At sundown they pushed the raft across the shore ice and got afloat. Midway across the Allegheny at a part of the river now known as Washington's Crossing, near 40th Street in the city of Pittsburgh, the raft got

caught in a jam of ice cakes. Washington pushed with his setting-pole, but the swift current swung the raft, a block of ice caught it, and he was hurled overboard into ten feet of water. Fortunately he was able to catch hold of a log of the raft as it swung past. Gist gave him a hand, and he succeeded in climbing aboard once more. He had lost his setting-pole, however. It was not possible to get to either shore. They drifted helplessly down the river until, lodging for a moment on the end of Wainwright's Island, they were able to scramble ashore, thankfully enough, and the raft swept on down the icy flood.

"Very soon Gist had a great fire burning," wrote Washington in his Journal. "By this I dried myself, but to keep warm was impossible, for the cold was the greatest I have ever known. So intense was it that Gist would not let me sleep, but made me walk about, although I was ready to drop, saying if we slept, and the fire would die, so should we. By good fortune there was a large jam of drifted wood on the upper end of the island and thus we had fuel.

"With the cold increasing, as the night wore on, even Gist, who was of great endurance, and hopeful, was concerned lest we should have been followed, and, as the island afforded small shelter, be shot by the Indians from the shore. This troubled me less than to keep warm, for there was not snow enough to build a hut, than which there is no better shelter.

"About ten o'clock that night we found the river was rising, so that it would take little more to flood us. What I found worst of all was the delay. I said things could hardly be worse, but that the cold was such as would freeze the river by daylight. Fortunately we had food enough. Gist kept me and himself awake by amazing stories of Indians and French and of great bears. But, contrive as we could, Gist

had his toes frozen, and had to have them rubbed with snow to save them. I was well pleased, at last, to see red in the sky to eastward, and when we found the ice cakes frozen hard together we made haste to cross to the shore. There, being out of shot and the sun warmer every minute, we built another fire and ate breakfast, and took, each in turn, an hour's sleep."

"There is really small fear of Indians either in darkness or in great cold," said Gist. "They like neither. The bitter cold, perhaps, saved us from pursuit."

"You will never again, sir, be in a worse business than that," continued Gist to Washington as they looked back on the river from the top of a hill. "And you will never see the like again."

But twice in his later life did Washington see the like—and twice did the lessons in endurance he learned that night serve him and his country well. For on the night before Christmas, in 1776, believing that the Hessians, like the Indians, might not like the cold, he made that famous Crossing the Delaware in a boat with General Knox, he and his troops alike in the greatest danger from the cakes of ice, but joking as he crossed!

And later at Valley Forge, although his soldiers suffered so greatly that their bloody footprints marked the snow-clad hills, that same snow and cold kept Sir William Howe in his snug quarters in Philadelphia.

So Washington learned the lesson which many an American soldier has learned since—that nothing helps quite so much in doing a hard thing or in suffering a hardship as having done it successfully before.

While they were in danger from the Indians, Gist had usually been silent, but now, when they were safe and on a

clear trail, he talked continually, whether Washington answered or not.

"Did you ever have a man shoot at you before?" he asked.

"No," replied Washington. And, now that his mind was turned to the matter, he thought it strange that so great an escape and such nearness to death had impressed him so little.

"I had no time to think before we caught the Indian. After that the great misery of the cold so distressed me that how to keep warm occupied my mind entirely," he said.

He was thinking most of how and of how soon he would be able to reach Williamsburg. They were now on a good trail, and by nightfall came to the cabin of Frazier at Turtle Creek. Here Washington wrote up his diary, and, hoping to secure pack-horses for the remainder of the journey, they waited, pleased to be fed and warm. The news of the massacres by the Ottawa Indians reached him here. Washington visited Aliquippa, Queen of the Indians, at her home near by, meeting her on a large rock upon which boy scouts still hold their councils, and making her a present of a match-coat and a bottle of rum he had from the trader; asking, too, her advice as to the Indians, all of which pleased her, greatly, especially the rum.

"I was surprised to find a woman ruling over the Indians, but what she said was wise in council. I never heard of a King Aliquippa," wrote Washington in his Journal. "The Queen was old and fat and as wrinkled as a frosted persimmon. She smoked a pipe and had a tomahawk in her belt, and I did not think she would be a comfortable partner in a marriage state."

At last, the hope of getting horses having failed, and after a three days' rest, they left on foot January 1, and,

after a sixteen-mile tramp, reached Gist's home on the Monongahela. Here Washington bought a horse, left Gist, and passed pack-horses carrying stores for the new fort which the English had begun to build at the Forks.

"I had no more appetite for adventure," wrote Washington, "and was glad to reach Williamsburg on January 16, 1754, where I delivered my sealed reply to Governor Dinwiddie, gave him my views and remembrance of what I had seen and heard, with maps I had made and drawings of the forts."

Van Braam, who came in later, told Washington that the elder French officers were rather amused that a boy should be sent on an errand that might bring about a war.

"I proposed to myself," said Washington, "to be as full of wiles as the Indians and to be very careful as to what I said to them and to the French. I think it was their indifference which left me free to observe all I wished to learn, which might bear upon military action in the future. It appeared to me that they felt so secure of their power as to be altogether careless."

The answer made to the governor was as modest, courteous, high-toned, and evasive as any old Frenchman ever penned. The French were there to obey orders, and meant to hold the lands. They would forward the summons to Marquis Duquesne. St. Pierre said polite words regarding Washington.

The governor and his council thought the answer was meant to gain time, although Washington thought it straightforward.

Washington had to prepare his report hastily in two days. His diary and careful notes were of great help, how-

ever. The report was printed, sent to the governor of every state and widely distributed throughout the colonies as well as sent to England and France. At this time and again soon after, the name of Washington became well known in all the colonies and on the other side of the ocean. The matters in which he was engaged proved to be of great importance. His conduct indicated the qualities of courage, resourcefulness, and wisdom in youth which grew greater and greater in manhood. He knew the country thoroughly, was honest, able, untiring, brave, and prudent.

As soon as Washington had ended his business with the governor he visited his mother, then rode on to Mount Vernon. There he found Lord Fairfax, and was pleased to rest and to hear his lordship speak well of his conduct in an extremely difficult affair.

When they were riding alone next day, Lord Fairfax rode long in silence, as was his way. At last he said:

"George, I have sent for copies of your report to be sent to my friends in England. It is well done. I am pleased that you would not talk much of it last night. The men who do not talk about themselves are the most talked about by others. Silence often insures praise."

"I shall remember your advice," said Washington.

He was not long left idle.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHARMING SOUND OF BULLETS

A TASTE OF VICTORY AND OF DEFEAT—THE SURPRISE OF THE FRENCH—WASHINGTON WINS HIS FIRST BATTLE—THE ATTACK ON FORT NECESSITY—INDIANS FIRE FROM THE TREES—FOOD AND AMMUNITION GONE—A FLAG OF TRUCE—SIGNING THE ARTICLES OF CAPITULATION—AN EARLY FOURTH OF JULY—A QUESTION OF HONOR—THE OPINION OF THE HALF-KING

Governor Dinwiddie at once began preparations to protect the interests of the English, sending letters and special messengers to the other colonies asking their aid. Washington was offered full command of a regiment newly organized, but, not feeling sure of his ability to hold so important a position, he, after consulting Lawrence and Lord Fairfax, accepted a commission as major, second in command.

Captain Trent, who had failed to carry the message to the French commandant, was sent with a force of men to complete the fort at the Forks of the Ohio, the point recommended by Washington as the best site to control that entire region.

Washington began trying to secure recruits. The best men were not willing to join, and he secured merely shoeless and poorly dressed fellows, who were, however, most of them hunters and good shots. When the governor offered bounties in the rich bottom-lands around the Forks of the Ohio, lands they did not yet control, better men joined.

Van Braam was made captain. He offered recruits all manner of rewards, together with an easy time, giving such accounts of the land they were to receive as pleased the hard-working farmers' sons.

On April 2, 1754, Washington and his recruits left Alex-

andria, Va., with orders to secure tools and build roads over which Colonel Frye could follow to the Ohio with a larger force and the artillery. Washington knew the difficulty of his task, but neither Governor Dinwiddie nor the rulers in England knew the nature of the country near the Forks of the Ohio. From the outlying Virginia farms to the Mississippi River were vast forests, and beyond the Ohio great meadows upon which hundreds of buffalo grazed. Through the Virginia hills were old Indian trails, and, as far as the Ohio, were horse paths used by the traders, with many cross trails, made by the deer and buffalo in their search for water. These would mislead any but trained woodmen. Only a few of the scouts and traders knew this wilderness. It was impossible to make those not used to the woods understand the difficulty and danger of trying to lead an army, with wagons and artillery, here.

Captain Trent failed to hold the fort he began to build at the Forks. One day, while he was absent, a force of hundreds of French and Indians suddenly appeared in canoes and swarmed up the river-bank. The few men working on the fort with an ensign in command were helpless, so offered no resistance. After a good supper they were allowed to leave unharmed, taking their tools with them.

These men found their way to Washington at last, who was approaching with a large force to protect the fort and complete it. It was a bitter disappointment to Washington to lose this choice location. The French at once built a larger fort which they named Fort Duquesne.

Washington had been sent to build bridges, to corduroy wet places in the swamps, and to make roads over which cannon could be taken. He was not to bring on hostilities, but was to assert the King of England's title to the land, and, at need, to resist the French. It is avoiding the beginning

of a fight between nations as well as between men that calls for the most patience and the greatest wisdom. The capture of the fort by the French began a war which extended through the colonies and to Europe, and lasted seven years.

Gist came into Washington's camp and reported that foreign soldiers' tracks had been seen in the neighborhood. Then the Half-King sent a runner saying, "Be on your guard," and reporting that a French scouting party of fifty men had been tracked to a secluded glen in the woods. It was raining heavily. Washington withdrew to his hut, got out his maps, and studied what should be done. The case required serious thought, as well as speedy action. He had no mind to fall back. It was bad enough that the fort at the Forks of the Ohio had been lost. Reports of French reinforcements and of Indian massacres kept coming in. Van Braam, who had been sent scouting, returned, reporting that the French were crossing by a ford, their number unknown. Several of Washington's men had deserted and there was much uneasiness in camp.

"Many times since," said Washington later, "I have been in as doubtful and perilous positions, where the fate of an empire was concerned, but then I have had with me officers of distinction. I was alone, hardly more than a boy, surrounded by men who were becoming alarmed. I said to Van Braam that we must not be caught here—but that I would not fall back very far. The old trooper smiled, and I confess to have been pleased by this sign of approval. My mind was made up not to return to the settlements except before an overwhelming force. On May 23, six more of my men having deserted, I retreated to Great Meadows, a wide open space free of large trees, a charming place for

an encounter, and here I cleared the ground of bushes, began a log fort and prepared to remain until I heard further."

Washington early learned to make his own decisions and to rely on his own judgment. All day he had been in a troubled state of mind. But the word Gist brought of a prowling band within five miles, and the promise of aid from the Half-King if he would attack them, brought him to a decision and put to flight all his doubts.

Setting out at dead of night from Great Meadows, through a pouring rain, Washington led about fifty of his soldiers, including Indian guides. He had given his orders carefully, had tied an extra pair of moccasins to his belt, taking no gun himself. He left behind a guard for his baggage. Most of the men he took were good shots and trained scouts.

The Half-King and a few of his warriors met the party as agreed, at a spring, now known as Washington's Spring, about two miles north of The Summit, on the Old National Pike, near Uniontown. From here they stumbled on, single file, jostling one another. The rain poured down in torrents. Washington learned from the Indian scouts, through his interpreter, that De Jumonville, the French commander, was in a glen, well chosen for a hiding-place but poor for defense. The party pushed on, the Indian guides ahead, stumbling about in the dripping woods, crawling under or over wet logs, often losing their way. Washington was sometimes eagerly in front, trying to see what was ahead, sometimes back among his men, silencing them or warning them to keep their flintlocks dry.

At last, toward dawn, they came to where they could look down on the French camp.

"The wind being in our faces," said Washington later,

"we had smelt the smoke of their fires a quarter of a mile away, and now and then, even at this distant day the smell of smoke from wet wood smouldering in the rain recalls to

"As I moved out alone from the shelter of the rocks and trees, a man came from a hut and gave a great shout."

my mind that night. To my joy the camp was silent and there were no sentinels. I halted my men, and my orders were whispered down the trail for them to scatter to the right while the Indians moved to the left. After giving time for this, I moved out alone from the shelter of the rocks and trees. As I did so a man came from a hut and

gave a great shout. At once the French were out with their arms and began to fire, but had no cover. Some of my own men were trained Indian fighters, and kept to the shelter of the trees, moving from trunk to trunk, and firing very deliberately. I heard the bullets whizz around me, and felt at once, and for the first time, in war, the exhilaration of danger. A man fell at my side, and I called to those near me to keep to the trees, but did not myself fall back, feeling it well to encourage my men.

"For a little while the firing was hot. It lasted, however, but fifteen minutes. Then I saw an officer fall, and they gave up and cried for quarter, as I ran down into their camp to stop the Indians from using their tomahawks and killing the wounded.

"Van Braam told me afterwards that I exposed myself needlessly, but I thought this was necessary to give spirit and confidence to men who, many of them, were new to battle."

De Jumonville and ten of his men were killed, others hurt, and twenty-two captured. Among the latter was La Force, who was in no wise cast down, but told Washington he would pay well for his success, claiming the French were entirely innocent. One man escaped and told the story of the fight to the French.

Washington found, on the person of De Jumonville, papers fully proving his hostile intention. He gave the French officers clothes from his own scanty supply, and sent his prisoners under a strong guard to Williamsburg, asking the governor to extend to the officers such respect and favor as were due gentlemen under such unfortunate circumstances, but warning him against La Force, one of the most troublesome and wily half-breeds on the frontier.

Washington buried De Jumonville beside the little stream where he fell. His grave may still be seen, marked by a tablet. Here among the trees, only four miles from the National Pike, and not a long hike from either the site of Fort Necessity or from the grave of General Braddock, who fell later, a boy of to-day may stand in the very footsteps of Washington, with the scene but little changed in all the years that have passed. Perhaps nowhere else in America has there been less change. Probably nowhere else can a boy place himself so nearly in the actual surroundings Washington knew as when he drinks from the Washington Spring, and follows the winding road over the hills and then the footpath through the woods, beside the rippling little stream, until he comes to the grave of De Jumonville.

Thus George Washington won his first battle, which proved to be the real beginning of the Seven Years' War, and which has had more wide-reaching results than any other small battle in our history. Washington was, as ever, resourceful in strategy, independent and daring in decision, cool, courageous, and fearless under fire, chivalrous in victory.

"I have heard the bullets whistle," he wrote to his brother Jack, "and believe me, there is something charming in the sound."

When this remark was reported later to George the Second, the King of England replied:

"He would not say so if he had been used to hear many."

The French tried to make it appear that De Jumonville and his men were on a peaceful mission and had been traitorously murdered in the dark by Washington and what they called his cowardly crew. But the evidence is clear that their intentions were not peaceful and that they fired first.

Colonel Frye, meantime, died. Young George Washington became colonel and head of the Virginia troops. He returned, with his half-starved, ill-clad men, to Great Meadows, and worked on the fort, which they named Fort Necessity, because that name suggested their needs. They built the fort of logs, breast high, one hundred feet square, with partitions, and surrounded at some distance by a shallow ditch and palisadoes. Here three hundred men joined them from Wills Creek, among the number Doctor Craik, Washington's friend and physician for many years, one of those merry men who are most valuable in camp because they keep all others in good humor.

Washington's old military teacher, Adjutant Muse, also joined him here, bringing more men, a small supply of ammunition, nine swivels, together with a wampum belt, presents and medals for the Indians. Washington delivered the wampum and presents with a great ceremony, which Doctor Craik thus described in a letter home:

A space in the meadows near the fort was cleared and all our men sat around under arms in a great circle. In the middle stood the Colonel, very tall, and like all of us, very thin for lack of diet, for we are all shrunk like persimmons in December. Before him were seated the Half-King, and the son of Aliquippa, the Queen of one of the tribes. The warriors were painted to beat even a London lady and no bird has more feathers or finer. The pipe of Council was passed around, and all took a few whiffs. When it came to the turn of our Colonel, he sneezed and coughed and made a wry face, but none of the Indians so much as smiled, for they are a very solemn folk. I could not refrain to laugh, so hid my face in the last handkerchief I possess. There are holes in it, too. Then we had the Indian's speech and after that, the one the governor sent to be spoken. After this the Colonel hung around the necks of the chiefs medals of silver sent from England. One had the British lion maul-

ing the French rooster, and on the other side the King's likeness.

Then the drums were beat and the son of Aliquippa was taken into Council as a sachem, and given, as is the custom, a new name. I suppose it is a kind of heathen christening. He is called Fairfax. I hope his lordship will look after his Godson, or devil son, as he is more like to be. The Half-King was made proud with the name of Dinwiddie, and so we are friends until to-morrow, and allies—I call them *all lies.* After that the Colonel read the morning service which I hope pleased them. They believed he was making magic.

The Half-King had been greatly disappointed at not being allowed to take more scalps from De Jumonville's men, and went away, but promised to return, bringing many warriors. He told his friends that the English had at last begun in earnest, but that it was no good war to keep prisoners.

A regiment of Independents from South Carolina also joined Washington at Fort Necessity. They were under Captain Mackey, who held a commission from the King of England, and, therefore, declined to receive commands from Washington. Mackey's men were called Independents because they were paid by the king and were better dressed, fed, and drilled than Washington's hastily gathered troops from Virginia. The men from South Carolina would neither help build the roads nor work on the fort. They said they were neither diggers nor woodsmen, but soldiers.

Colonel Washington bore these trials with great patience. He knew that two masters were worse in an army than anywhere else.

He could not endure to see his faithful soldiers working while the loafers from South Carolina merely looked on

and jeered. So he and the Virginia troops went forward, completing the roads toward the Forks of the Ohio, while the Carolina men remained at ease near the unfinished fort.

When he was thirteen miles beyond Fort Necessity, Washington learned that Fort Duquesne had been reinforced and that he was to be attacked by a large force. He sent back for Captain Mackey, held a council of war, and decided that they had a better chance to defend themselves at Fort Necessity. The officers gave up their horses to carry ammunition, and they began a retreat with all possible speed. The weather was of the worst, hot and raining.

The French were coming down the river under command of De Villiers, a brother of De Jumonville, and had vowed vengeance upon what they called the cruel Washington and his murderous gang. Now that they were in danger of attack, the Independents worked frantically upon the fortifications which they had been too proud to finish in time, as if it were their last day on earth. Indeed it proved to be so for many of them.

Unfortunately, some of the Indians told the French that Washington meant to make a stand at Fort Necessity.

"Whether I should fall back further or not was now a matter of little choice," said Washington. "If I retreated with tired, half-starved men, De Villiers' large well-fed force and quick-footed Indians would surely overtake us, and we should have to meet superior numbers without being intrenched. If Captain Mackey, in my absence, had done anything to complete my fort I should have done better. Meanwhile we might be aided with men from Winchester, or at least be provisioned. I said nothing to the South Carolina captain of his neglect, for that would do no good,

and I desired, when it came to fighting he should be in a good humor.

"News seemed to fly through the forest as if the birds carried it, and I was not surprised to learn that the Half-King and nearly all his warriors had stolen away. He was out of humor with the officers I had left in charge and said no one consulted him."

When they reached Fort Necessity, Washington and all his own officers took off their coats and went to work to help with axes, strengthening the fort. Doctor Craik was very merry, cheering the poor fellows who were worn out with work. Captain Stobo would have had the trees nearest the fort cut down, fearing the Indians would fire from them, but the rangers could work no more. On July 3 the scouts came in hastily, reporting that a large force of French and Indians were a mile away. Washington left Captain Mackey in the fort and placed his rangers in the trenches outside. At four in the afternoon a great storm broke, with torrents of rain and with thunder and lightning. The trenches were half filled with mud and water, like those in which our boys fought in France. The pans and priming of the old-fashioned muskets got wet and Washington's men were unable to keep up the fire. Seeing this, Washington fell back into the fort. Soon, to his dismay, shots began to fall among them from the Indians in the tall trees. Many men began to drop, and at dusk the ammunition was nearly all gone. For nine hours they fought in the mist and rain.

At seven o'clock the French, noticing that the firing had almost stopped, called a parley. Washington declined; but at eight, knowing he had neither ammunition nor provisions left, Washington answered their second flag saying he would send an officer. The only one who spoke French well, however, was wounded and in great suffering. Wash-

ington had reason deeply to regret that he did not know French. He sent Van Braam, who claimed to understand a little.

The terms proposed at first were so dishonorable that Washington would not consider them. At last, however, it was agreed that Washington's troops were to march out with all the honors of war, and Van Braam and Captain Stobo volunteered to go as hostages for the safe return of Drouillon and La Force, whom Washington had previously captured. Van Braam returned with the articles of capitulation ready for Washington to sign.

"It was eleven o'clock and very dark," said Washington. "It was raining furiously, and we heard the terms read by the light of one candle, which was put out by the rain over and over, as Van Braam, with no great ease, let me hear what, he declared, was set down. Unhappily, he translated the words which twice made me agree to be taken as the *assassin* of De Villiers' brother De Jumonville, so as to read that the French had come to revenge the *death* of that gentleman, and understanding it to mean this and no more I signed the paper and thus innocently subjected myself to a foul calumny."

At dawn, July 4, just twenty-two years before the Declaration of Independence, upon one of those 4ths that have made America famous, Washington, with drums beating and colors flying, marched out of Fort Necessity.

"I was reminded of it," said Washington later, "when, on July 9, 1776, I paraded the Continental army to announce that, on July 4th the Congress had declared that we were no longer colonies, but free and independent states. Then I remembered the humiliation of that morning when we filed away before those who were later to become our friends and allies."

The original of the articles of capitulation signed by Washington at Fort Necessity was recently found in the French archives at Montreal.

Bidding good-by to Van Braam and Stobo, and all on foot, because their horses had all been taken when they were forced to leave them outside the fort, Washington and his men marched sadly away, bearing their wounded on rude litters.

When they had gone scarcely a mile the Indians, contrary to the terms of the surrender, fell upon and robbed the rear baggage. Washington resisted boldly, however, and drove them off. destroying all useless baggage and setting out again.

Some died on the way. Others fell out and were never heard of again. At length, half-starved and weary, the remainder covered the seventy miles and reached Wills Creek, now Cumberland, over what is now the National Pike. The journey is at present one of the most beautiful and historically interesting half-day automobile rides in America.

Washington at once rode on with Captain Mackey and reported to Governor Dinwiddie at Williamsburg.

"I felt at this time that I was the most unfortunate of men," said Washington later. "But I could not so much reproach myself as those who failed to supply me with ammunition and provisions necessary to success."

"George," said his kinsman Colonel Willis, "I dare venture that this little fire which you have set blazing will set the world aflame."

And he spoke truly.

Next morning a messenger summoned Washington from his inn.

"There is some trouble about the capitulations, but I do not know what. You are wanted at once by the council," he said.

Washington found a number of gentlemen in the council chamber, standing in silence. All of them appeared very serious when he went in. The governor, a bulky man, red in the face and irritable, was cursing and stamping about the room.

Lord Fairfax alone received Washington pleasantly, coming forward to greet him. The others merely bowed.

Governor Dinwiddie came forward, holding the capitulations in one hand and striking them with the other.

"Explain, sir," he cried, "explain how you, an officer of the king, came to admit over your signature that you were an assassin, and twice, sir twice. I consider you disgraced."

Lord Fairfax laid a hand on Washington's arm to stay him, and said:

"Your Excellency, it is not the manner among us to condemn a man unheard, nor, sir, to address a gentleman as you have permitted yourself to do."

"That, sir, is also my opinion," said Colonel Cary.

Washington was grateful for this, for Cary had not always been kind to him.

Then Colonel Willis, Washington's cousin, came across the room and said to him:

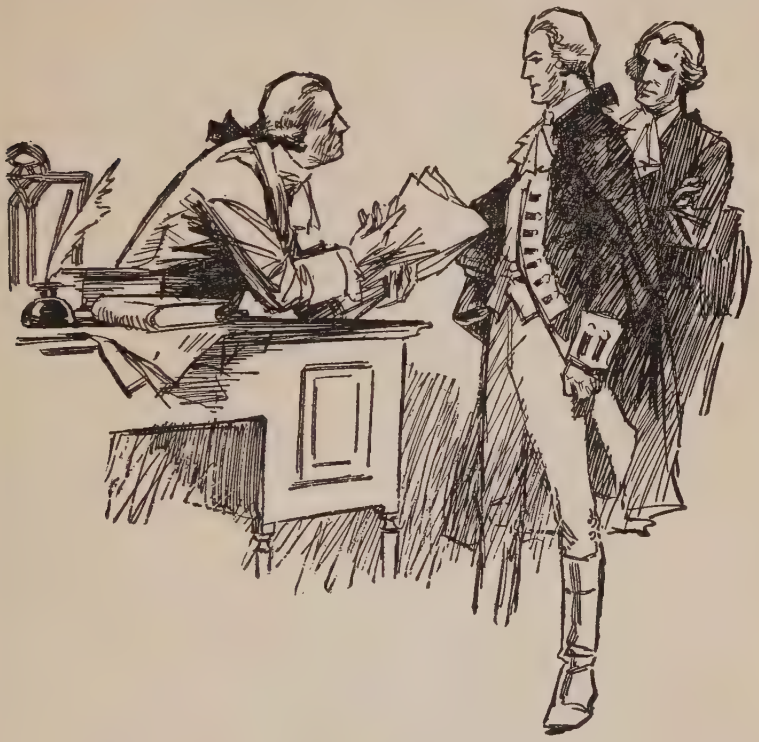
"Keep yourself quiet, George."

Washington bowed and asked to be shown the translation. He read it slowly, while no one spoke. For a moment he was too amazed to speak. As he looked up, utterly confounded, Lord Fairfax said:

"Well, colonel?"

Then Colonel Washington related the facts, stating that

Captains Mackey and Stephens had heard Van Braam translate the articles, that he had used the word *death*, and not the word for *assassination*, but that he was sure it was igno-



"Explain, sir, . . . how you, an officer of the king, came to admit that you were an assassin."

rance on Van Braam's part, and no worse. There was also confusion in the terms of the pledge regarding building forts within the next year.

When Washington had thus fully accounted for the misunderstanding, Lord Fairfax said:

"Then, gentlemen, this unfortunate mistake and this unlucky pledge were due to the governor's council having failed to provide Colonel Washington with a competent French interpreter."

Colonel Byrd laughed outright at this transfer of the blame.

Governor Dinwiddie, with a great oath, cried:

"Nonsense, my lord."

Then turning to Washington he added:

"You should be discharged in disgrace, sir; you are unfit to command."

"Be careful of your words, governor," said Lord Fairfax quietly.

This caution stopped the governor. But, amid entire silence, he stood shaking with anger, so that, although his wig was covered with a net, the white powder fell from it on his scarlet coat.

Washington threw the capitulations upon the table. Then, controlling himself with great difficulty, he said:

"I have explained myself to the honorable council and have no more to say."

"I presume, sir, we must accept your statement," said the governor.

Washington paused a moment, looking about him.

"If any gentleman here doubts it, I——"

"I do not," interrupted Colonel Cary. "I think the matter cleared, Colonel Washington, and I trust that his Excellency will see that he has spoken in haste."

Lord Fairfax and others spoke to like effect, with a degree of warmth that set Washington somewhat more at ease.

The governor, much vexed to be thus taken to task, added:

"I am satisfied Van Braam is a traitor. I will see Captain Stephens and ask him to confirm Colonel Washington's statement."

Then, to Colonel Washington's surprise, the governor invited him to dinner. And seeing Lord Fairfax nod to him Washington accepted, but with no very good-will.

So ended Washington's first campaign. Even a schoolboy, and especially any thoughtful one, as he thinks over the stirring events of Washington's later life, of his patience under misunderstanding and abuse, of his quick determination when he had a fighting chance, of his masterly retreats when outnumbered, of the fortitude with which he endured cold, hunger, weariness, all through the trying years from the snow-clad hills of Valley Forge to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, will realize how providentially he was prepared and disciplined in his youth for the service and sacrifice which made him the foremost and greatest American.

The Half-King, who had so prudently departed before the arrival of the French, has left us a candid account of his opinion of Washington and his opponents.

"The colonel," said the chief, "was a good-natured man, but had no experience. He took upon him to command the Indians as slaves, and would send them every day scouting or to attack the enemy themselves. He would by no means take advice from the Indians. He lay in one place from one full moon to another, without making any fortifications, except that little thing on the meadow. Had he taken advice, and built such fortifications as I advised him, he might easily have beaten off the French. But the French, in the engagement, acted like cowards, and the English like fools."

He does not say how he and his warriors acted!

The Virginia House of Burgesses, however, saw no reason to reproach the young commander, handicapped as he had been. They passed a vote of thanks for his bravery in both battles and granted a pistole, or about four dollars apiece, to his soldiers.

CHAPTER VII

MASTER OF MOUNT VERNON

A SEARCH FOR HEALTH—THE LOSS OF LAWRENCE—PEACE AND COMFORT AGAIN —HORSES AND HOUNDS—A NOBLE ESTATE—THE CALL OF DUTY

For some years the health of Washington's half-brother Lawrence had been failing rapidly. Washington had gone with him to Barbados in 1751 at his request. Gist's surveys of the Ohio, together with the early efforts of both English and French to secure the aid of the Indians, occurred while they were absent. Lawrence determined to remain in Bermuda, and George, torn between his public duty and his affection for his brother, yielded to Lawrence's urgent advice and returned home in February, 1752, having been cured of his early fondness for the sea by a five weeks' voyage of very stormy weather.

"I am of opinion that I must have seemed, when younger, to be a dull plodding lad," said Washington later. "But as time went on Lawrence came to think more of me than did any other, except Lord Fairfax, and in his last illness he gave me such evidence of his esteem as greatly strengthened my hope that I should justify his belief in me."

A beautiful friendship existed between these two. George was:

"Brother, at once, and son."

Lawrence realized that his life was nearing its end and gave his thought to his wife, his little daughter, and to George, upon whom he had come to rely greatly. It was Lawrence who, when he resigned his place as an officer in

the Virginia militia, recommended George as his successor. It was Lawrence who, while president of the Ohio Company, secured the services of the young surveyor for that organization.

Lawrence's search for health failed, however, and he hurried home to end his days, reaching Mount Vernon in the spring of 1752, where he died in July. He had appointed George one of the executors of his estate. The little daughter of Lawrence died in 1754, leaving Washington, under the terms of his father's will, master of Mount Vernon at the age of twenty-two. Lawrence's wife had a life interest in the estate, however, and George paid her fifteen thousand pounds of tobacco yearly until her death in 1761.

No American, least of all, a boy who could hike there during a summer vacation, or visit it in any other way, should rest content until he has seen and studied the city which is named after the Father of his Country. It is admittedly one of the most beautiful capitals in the world. Its stately avenues, planned so wisely over a century ago by the French engineer L'Enfant, who foresaw its greatness and made possible its beauty, make it a model for all American cities. Its noble monuments, the greatest of these that matchless white shaft to Washington himself, the classic Lincoln memorial, the numerous others in the city and at Arlington, perpetuate in bronze and marble the deeds of the men who have made the nation great. The inscriptions tell everywhere of heroism. The mammoth buildings which house the activities of the government, the beauteous library, a temple of learning, and most stately and inspiring of all the Capitol itself with its majestic dome towering, white by day and a beacon of light by night, will quicken the souls of patriots, young and old, as they thrill with pride in their country.

But nothing in Washington, nor all of Washington together, weaves quite the same magic spell over the hearts of Americans as a sail down the Potomac to Mount Vernon, which still sits upon the river bank in silent majesty, save when a passing vessel tolls out its tribute to the great leader who lived there over a century ago.

In the making of men the home has ever been a most potent factor. The home is where the heart dwells. And in understanding men nothing is more helpful than to understand the home in which they grew up, the scene of their joys and sorrows, their suffering and their sacrifice.

Throughout all his life Washington was passionately fond of Mount Vernon. As a lad he always found a welcome there from Lawrence and his wife, met the gentry of the neighborhood and was initiated into that life and hospitality for which the first families of Virginia have been famous for centuries. He rode the hills after the hounds, fished and swam in the Potomac, and hunted through the woods.

It was to Mount Vernon that he later took his bride in triumph. It was there his heart turned throughout all the years of war and stress. Whenever possible, between expeditions and wars he returned for rest and inspiration. It was to Mount Vernon he retired after bidding his officers farewell at the end of the revolution. It was there he went again after the end of his second term as President. It was there he died, in accordance with his wish. And there, on the hillside overlooking the peaceful Potomac, is his tomb, a sanctuary of service and sacrifice.

But throughout all the years, no sooner had he comfortably settled at Mount Vernon, in the hope of peace and happiness, with an opportunity to look after his estate, than

some duty would call him away, sometimes to one trial, sometimes to another.

All the colonies, especially Virginia, were poorly governed at this time, particularly in regard to their military affairs. Perhaps for this reason and possibly because the king rightfully considered his officers better trained than the raw militia of the colonies, the latter were always outranked by any officer holding a royal commission, even an officer on half-pay or one of the Independents who were commissioned directly by the governors acting for the king. Unwilling to submit to this, Washington resigned his commission and retired to private life at Mount Vernon, to give much needed attention to his neglected estate. For so young a man he had won great glory and had undergone great hardship. He had learned many valuable lessons in the school of bitter experience, and had an empty pocket, but a strong inclination for military life.

Hardly had he settled down to the comfort of life at Mount Vernon when Captain Stobo, one of the hostages retained by the French, succeeded in getting a letter through to the English saying he believed Fort Duquesne might easily be captured.

Washington was, therefore, caught once more between inclination and duty. It distressed him to see Mount Vernon, which should be a profitable estate, suffering from neglect. Nothing would please him more than to take it in hand, and in his methodical, capable way, bring it back again to productive value. As he rode his rounds over the plantation each morning on his favorite horse he saw hundreds of things needing his attention. And as he rode after the hounds he loved so well, or hunted or fished or swam, he was entirely content with the life of a Virginia gentleman.

On the other hand, he could not get over his regret that the English had lost their hold on the Forks of the Ohio, for he felt more and more certain that it was a location destined for a great future. He resolved never to be content until Fort Duquesne had fallen and until the English flag should float over the fortifications at the Forks.

Governor Dinwiddie refused to return the French officers captured by Washington, although bound by the terms of the capitulation of Fort Necessity to do so. Stobo and Van Braam were, therefore, still held in prison as hostages by the French at Quebec. Both these matters distressed Washington and he tried in vain to remedy them.

England, about this time, began active preparations to recapture Fort Duquesne. Ten thousand pounds in money and a force of troops under General Edward Braddock were sent over, with instructions to drive the French from all the territory claimed by England near the Forks of the Ohio.

General Braddock then did the wisest, perhaps the only wise, thing in his entire military operations in America. He offered Washington a place on his staff. As this would give him an opportunity to continue his military career, to learn from capable officers, and especially to help recapture Fort Duquesne, at the same time removing the embarassment arising from the conflict over commissions, Washington gladly accepted.

This opportunity, along with his previous experience and preparation, led to one of the most dramatic epochs of his entire life, and perhaps did more in preparing him for his great future than any other single thing.

But it meant that he must leave his beloved Mount Vernon once more.

CHAPTER VIII

A GENERAL OF THE COLD STREAM GUARDS

THE MOTHER COUNTRY AND THE YOUNG COLONY—A BRITISH BULLDOG—A BRAVE OLD REGIMENT—ENGLISH FIGHTERS IN INDIAN WARFARE—THE ADVICE OF FRANKLIN AND WASHINGTON—THE AMERICAN WAY

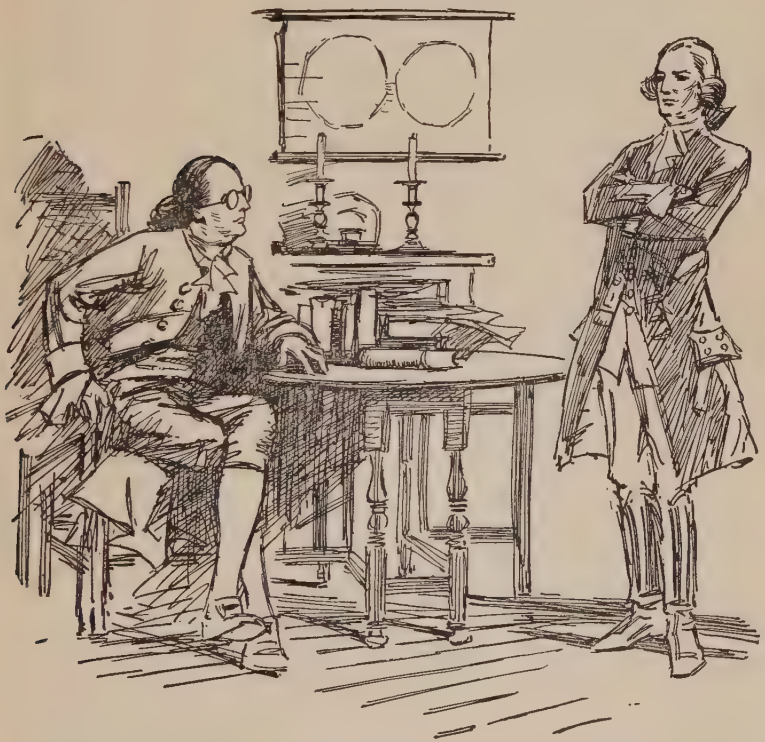
A lad who really wishes to understand the relations between the mother country and the colonies can learn more from the incidents which surround Fort Duquesne than from any other period in American history.

General Edward Braddock had been an officer in the Cold Stream Guards for almost half a century. Just what that means it is difficult for an American boy fully to realize.

England was the mother, full of years of experience. America was the lusty young son, independent, anxious to meet new conditions in a new way.

General Braddock had worn the red coat of the king through many hard-fought campaigns. The Cold Stream Guards was one of the oldest and proudest of the king's regiments. It had fought on many a bloody field. Its men and officers were trained to die, if necessary, but never to surrender. The general was headstrong and quick-tempered, but brave as a lion, absolutely without fear, honorable in intent, and courteous. On those famous Fields of Flanders, where brave soldiers have fought and died before and since, no troops could possibly give a better account of themselves than the Cold Stream Guards had done. Nor was any officer of the king better trained or more capable than General Braddock for the conditions of war found there. But Flanders Fields are far from the Forks of the Ohio, and an Indian ambush far from a charge across a level plain.

So confident was General Braddock of the ability of his troops to conquer any enemy that all efforts to explain to him the peculiar nature of the campaign he was undertaking



"These savages may be a formidable enemy to raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops it is impossible they should make an impression."

and the kind of enemy he was to meet were unavailing. There were but two men in the colonies to whom he would even listen respectfully. One of these was Benjamin Franklin, who was said to be centuries old when he was born and

who had added fifty years of wisdom and experience to his store. Franklin knew how to point out a man's folly without hurting his feelings. The other man was Washington, who as yet lacked Franklin's wisdom and experience, but who had the good sense to talk only upon things which he thoroughly understood.

But while Braddock listened respectfully to these two he, English-like, insisted upon taking his own knowledge and experience in preference to accepting theirs.

When Franklin tried to give General Braddock some idea of Indian warfare the old soldier replied:

"These savages may be a formidable enemy to raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops it is impossible they should make an impression."

So Franklin ceased to waste good counsel, but devoted himself to obtaining, on his own word of honor as security, the much-needed horses and wagons which Braddock's imported quartermaster-general had been unable to procure in spite of all his threats and profanity.

Nor was Washington any more successful in his endeavor to tell the general of the nature of the country, of the campaign, or of the fighting habits of the Indians.

Braddock was a typical British bulldog fighter, and could not be induced to fight except in his own way.

"He is incapable of giving up any points he asserts," said Washington, "be they ever so incompatible with reason or common sense."

The young aide had frequent disputes with his general. He, on his part, felt just as certain of his ground. He knew the country about the Forks of the Ohio, having tramped it repeatedly. He knew the dense forests, the misleading winding trails, the steep hills, the streams, and most of all,

the ways in which the Indians and the French frontiersmen fought. He kept his temper, however, in the disputes, and did his best to help.

No problem in life is more difficult for a young man than that of deciding just when he ought to be guided by the wisdom and experience of his elders and when he ought to rely upon his own instead. And of the many compliments paid to Washington none is higher or better deserved than those paid by Braddock just before he died. The brave bluff old warrior had learned to his sorrow that Flanders and its Fields present one kind of task, but the Forks of the Ohio quite a different one.

And no lesson that Washington ever learned was so important either during the Braddock campaign, or during the revolution that followed as the lesson that for Americans, if the time comes when they must fight, the American way of fighting is best.

It was this great lesson which Washington taught Pershing; which Fort Necessity, Braddock's Field, and Valley Forge taught Château Thierry and the Argonne, which the Continental army taught the American Legion.

The greater lesson which war and America are destined to teach the world is preparation for peace. Every American soldier, from Washington on, will join in those wise words of Grant, inscribed on his tomb at Riverside Drive, "Let us have Peace."

CHAPTER IX

RANGERS AND REGULARS

THE EXPEDITION AGAINST FORT DUQUESNE—AN ARMY IN THE WOODS—BRADDOCK'S COACH—THE GRENADIERS' MARCH—A SALUTE TO THE GENERAL—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN ON HORSEBACK—RECEPTION OF CAPTAIN JACK

General Braddock set out from Alexandria to conquer Fort Duquesne April 20, 1755. Washington hoped for a rapid march and a quick capture of the fort before the garrison could be reinforced. He was, however, bitterly disappointed. General Braddock, although he would listen respectfully to the advice of his young aide, insisted upon conducting the expedition on the elaborate tactics of Europe. He would not stoop to the makeshift expedients of a new country, where difficulties are met and overcome in a rough-and-ready pioneer style. Nor could he be persuaded seriously to consider fighting in the Indian way.

"These savages might defeat American militia," he said, loftily. "They will take to their heels, however, at the sight of the red uniform of the British regulars."

That red uniform proved, both then and since, to be quite valuable in winning recruits, but an easy mark for the enemy rifleman. It took a century and a half, however, to teach England to change it for the less gaudy but more serviceable khaki.

"I found," wrote Washington to his brother, "that instead of pushing on with vigor, without regarding a little rough road, they were halting to level every mole-hill, and to erect bridges over every brook, by which means we were four days in getting twelve miles."

Lord Fairfax himself came from Greenway Court, and rode a hundred miles with Washington as far as Wills

Creek, renamed Fort Cumberland after the captain-general of the English. On the last day of the ride, over some of the worst roads in the world, Washington told Lord Fairfax of the array of well-drilled men, sailors, and artillery he had seen at Alexandria, landed from Admiral Keppel's fleet, of his pleasure in being able to serve under a soldier of General Braddock's ability and experience, and of his belief that there would be no great danger from the French because they would be obliged to exert all their strength to repel the attacks which the English were about to make on their forts at Niagara and Crown Point.

As Washington talked, Lord Fairfax, who had seen greater armies, heard him in silence, and when he had ceased, remained for a time without comment. Then he handed Washington two letters which he had received from London. Washington read them and placed them in his buckskin-coat pocket—and they were the only papers he saved from Braddock's defeat. One of the letters said General Braddock was a stranger to both fear and common sense, and that his best fitness to fight Indians was that he was providentially bald, and so could not be scalped.

"I wish you luck with your new general. He is touchy, punctilious, of a stiff mind, and has had forty years in the guards," said the letter.

The other letter, from Colonel Conway, said:

I think the choice of Braddock unfortunate. He is a brave, or rather a reckless man, overconfident, arrogant, and sure to despise his enemies, and goes out, I am assured, with a bad opinion of the colonials. I wish the general may have good fortune, but I fear the matching of drill and pipe-clay against the wiles of the woods; as sensible would it be to set a fencing master with a rapier to fight a tiger in the jungle.

His lordship looked at Washington as he put away the letters.

"You will judge for yourself if this be the man to send into the wilderness," he said.

Lord Fairfax and Washington were riding in the rear of the Forty-eighth Foot, one of Braddock's regiments, when they heard a noise behind them. Pulling to one side, in the wood, they waited to see what was coming. Amid a heavy dust came General Braddock, in a fine red chariot which he had bought of Governor Sharpe, bumping, in great haste, over the worst roads possible, his escort of light horse riding beside him.

Washington saw the chariot pass the regiment ahead of them, watched the troops salute, and heard the drums beat The Grenadiers' March, a tune he was to hear again.

"If I were the general," said Washington, "I should have preferred a horse to a coach."

"Not if you were General Braddock," said Lord Fairfax.

"But the man is not a fool. He seems not to want for intelligence," continued Washington.

"An intelligent fool, George, is the worst kind. His intelligence feeds his folly," replied his lordship. "You will do well to talk little and quietly observe things for yourself. I know General Braddock to be a spendthrift, obstinate as a pig, and very self-confident. You know what a lot of drilled regulars will be worth in the woods. I fear also that the officers are quite unfit for the service."

By and by they heard the salute of seventeen guns fired as General Braddock entered the camp ahead.

As they came in sight of the tents about Wills Creek they were walking their horses, very tired, man and beast,

when a gentleman came toward them. He was mounted on an uneasy horse, and Washington saw, as they met and bowed, that his girth was loose and he was in danger of a fall. Dismounting, and with an apology, he set it right.

"Thank you," said the gentleman. "I am no horseman, as you plainly see. I prefer two certain legs to four uncertain ones."

"I am Lord Fairfax," said the nobleman, also dismounting. "This is my friend, Colonel George Washington. May we have the honor to know your name?"

"I am Benjamin Franklin," replied the gentleman. "Is this the Colonel Washington who was in command in the Jumonville affair?"

"I had that good fortune," replied Washington.

Franklin was at that time a vigorous man of forty-nine, clad very simply in gray, with a great head and a kindly look. Washington envied him the ease and exactness with which he talked, and the prudence he showed in speech. Of these qualities Lord Fairfax had little.

When Franklin learned that Washington was to serve as a volunteer aide he smiled and said:

"That is to manufacture glory for others and not even to get pay."

"I am, as it were, an apprentice," replied Washington, "anxious to acquire experience in war under one who knows the business."

"I hope you will not be disappointed," said Franklin.

Lord Fairfax smiled, but said nothing.

They were guided to headquarters, where General Braddock received them agreeably, inviting them to dine with him at four that afternoon, for the general kept very fashionable hours.

At dinner were toasts to the king and to the governor.

General Braddock raised his voice and addressed Mr. Peters, the secretary to Governor Morris of Pennsylvania.

"And when," he asked loudly, "do you set out to cut that road for my troops? You are long about it."

"When, sir, I get guards for the wood-cutters against Indians. Until then it will not be possible," replied the secretary quietly.

The general cursed Pennsylvania and the Quakers.

"That colony must find guards for their own wood-cutters," he said. "As to the Indians, his Majesty's regulars laugh at the idea of danger from them."

"Hear! hear!" cried several of the English officers.

"The Indians are not to be despised," quietly replied the secretary, Mr. Peters. "Every step of the march will be beset with ambuscades."

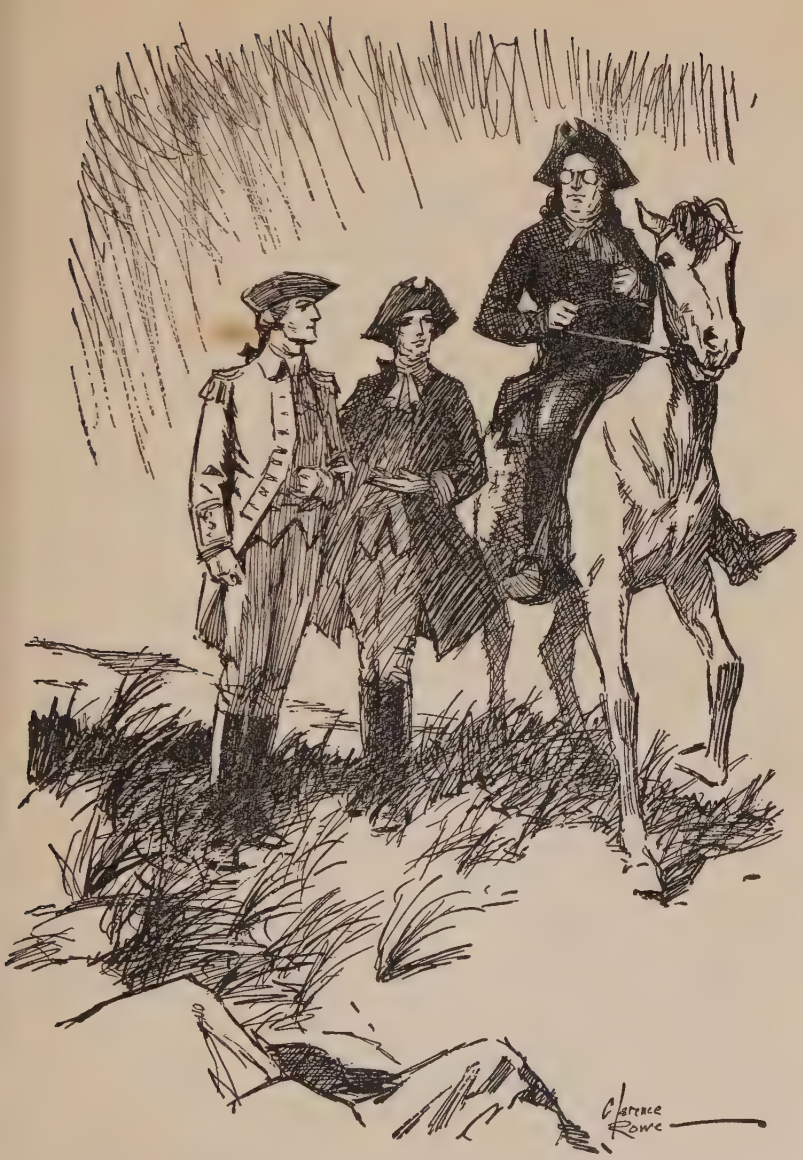
"I despise such counsel," cried General Braddock. "The colonials are like old women."

"You are entirely right, Mr. Peters. The general has been drinking. You must excuse him," said Washington aside to the secretary.

Lord Fairfax spoke quickly to General Braddock, who then turned suddenly and said:

"My apologies, Mr. Peters, and a glass of wine with you. You shall have your guards. You may rest assured, gentlemen, that I shall take Fort Duquesne. It will be only a matter of a day or two. Then I will proceed to Niagara and Frontenac."

"But, general, you must march through a narrow road, in a dense, pathless forest, and your line will be some four miles long. You will, I hope, take Fort Duquesne, but you will be in constant danger of being cut in two. The French



"This is my friend, Colonel George Washington. May we have the honor to know your name?"

and Indians are dexterous in ambuscades. I will, however, get you all the wagons you want from Pennsylvania," said Franklin.

"Thank you, sir," replied General Braddock. "Of course you speak as a civilian. Savages may be formidable to raw American militia. But they will make no impression whatever on his Majesty's trained troops."

"I am conscious, sir, of the impropriety of arguing such matters with a military man. But I should like to ask Colonel Washington his opinion. He has had some experience in the irregular warfare of our woods."

Lord Fairfax, anxious that Washington should not be obliged to contradict his superior officer, quickly interrupted:

"I beg to answer for Colonel Washington that General Braddock will, no doubt, from time to time, consult such Colonial officers as have seen service on the frontier."

General Braddock replied that he would gladly take his lordship's advice.

Washington spent much of his time learning the methods of drill and discipline of the English troops and trying to satisfy the Virginians that training was necessary, although he confessed that when it came to wood-fighting the English officers and men could well learn from the rangers. English army ways astonished and interested him. There were constant quarrels between the officers and men of the king and of the colonies. General Braddock was much disgusted with the delays in supplying him with wagons, and only increased his troubles by cursing the colonies.

Just before leaving Fort Cumberland, Lord Fairfax presented Washington with a handsome pair of pistols, which may still be seen at Mount Vernon.

"I should have been pleased to have had a son like you," he said.

On June 6, Sir John St. Clair was sent on in advance with six hundred choppers to widen and improve Washington's old road. After him came Sir Peter Halket's force. As soon as the march began the lack of discipline was plain. There was much drunkenness, the officers being worse than the men.

"I should like to give these fellows a wood drill and upset the rum kegs," said Captain Croghan of the rangers to Washington. "Why, sir, there are hundreds of wagons, and enough gimcracks and nonsense to fit out a town. All the officers of foot are on horseback."

"I have called the general's attention to these matters," replied Washington. "He seems to listen to me merely because Lord Fairfax asked him to, but does not do as I advise. We should use our horses for pack-horses only and carry just what we need."

"That would be, for each man, a blanket, an axe, a rifle, a knife, and ammunition," said the captain.

General Braddock followed no advice, however, except that from the king's officers.

One day Captain Croghan came to Washington with a tall man in buckskin, leggins, and moccasins, carrying a long rifle and a scalping knife.

"This, Colonel Washington, is my friend Captain Jack, the famous scout. He has come with fifty other Pennsylvania woodmen and hunters to offer to serve as scouts."

Washington had often heard of Captain Jack. His entire family had been massacred by the Indians. He had spent years in avenging himself, sometimes alone, some-

times with other scouts. He represented just the ability needed for such an expedition. So Washington made him welcome, told him how glad they were to have the offer of his services, and handed him, as was then the custom, a drink of rum.

"I drink no spirits," said Captain Jack.

He was very silent, making brief replies to Washington's questions about the Indians and their wishes.

Suddenly he rose.

"My men are waiting to camp. I wish to see the general. Will you take me to him?"

As they passed, the men eyed the scout curiously. He was six feet three inches tall, very thin, and of a sad appearance.

The scout did not speak again. Major Moore, a rough, hard-drinking officer of the grenadiers, who was then under the influence of liquor, stopped them.

"Who is this? Make a fine grenadier!" he said, for the grenadiers always sought tall men.

"This is Captain Jack, a famous Pennsylvania scout," replied Washington.

"Who the deuce made you a captain?" asked the major, rudely.

"This!" said Captain Jack, tapping his rifle, and walked on.

Washington sent his name in to General Braddock and they were admitted to his tent. He introduced Captain Jack as an experienced ranger who had brought with him fifty good scouts. General Braddock asked Colonel Washington to be seated. But as he did not invite the scout to sit down, Washington also remained standing. The captain said nothing, but looked steadily at the general.

"What do they want?" asked General Braddock.

"No pay, nothing," interrupted Captain Jack.

Washington tried to make the general see the great help scouts like this would be in the woods.

"Who the deuce made you a captain?" asked the major, rudely.

"These men cannot be drilled," burst out Braddock, impatiently. "I have experienced troopers upon whom to rely for anything I need. Let the man wait. I will see him in a day or two."

He was going to give orders, however, as to where the scouts should camp when Captain Jack turned and went out without a word.

The general cursed him roundly for an ill-bred cur. Washington hurried after the scout. When he had overtaken him Captain Jack said quietly:

"Good-by, Colonel Washington. When you have a separate command send for me."

Washington made a vain attempt to induce him to remain. In half an hour, however, he had his men together, and they went away into the woods, Indian fashion, one after the other, and Washington saw them no more.

Captain Jack and his fifty well-trained American scouts, if properly used, might have turned Braddock's defeat into victory, have saved the general his life, and have secured the capture of Fort Duquesne on the first attempt instead of the third. A good scout is an ally never to be lightly discarded, and no soldier is ever strong enough to disdain his enemy. No lesson that Washington ever learned or taught is more important than that Americans should confidently do things in the American way. Proper teamwork between such scouts and the regulars would have meant victory instead of defeat. A few trained scouts, sent on ahead with the axe-men, together with a proper handling of the army, would have changed everything.

CHAPTER X

THE SHADES OF DEATH

THE MARCH THROUGH THE WOODS—FOES IN HIDING—A DISMAL JOURNEY—WASHINGTON'S ILLNESS AND PERSEVERANCE

The army of two thousand men followed routes over the mountains which Washington had used in 1754. The regulars were entirely unaccustomed to taking care of themselves in the woods. They complained bitterly of black flies, midges, those little tormentors of the forest, and mosquitoes, and there was much sickness. Washington had seen many hard rains and thunderstorms, but he said later that they had on this expedition two of the worst he ever saw. Three soldiers died of rattlesnake bites. The little tick, a forest insect that bores under the skin and, if not removed, leaves itching sores for weeks, made their life a torment. The rangers undressed every night and picked off these pests. But the regulars were either too lazy or too ignorant to care properly for themselves, and many were lame from ulcers.

Washington and the colonial officers knew the great danger which constantly threatened an army, stretched in a thin line over four miles long, across streams and swamps, through deep forests which gave every opportunity for surprise and attack. The trees were very tall, and so thick were the white pines beyond Great Savage Mountain that the trail was like twilight. These dark woods had for many years been called "The Shades of Death." The regulars, already sick, tired, and discouraged, had never in all

their campaigns seen timber like this. When told this name by the rangers, they began to imagine that there were Indian foes lurking behind every tree. Many of them were Scotch and Irish, merry in sunshine, but always inclined to be sad and despondent in shadow.

They were glad to be out of the dark forests at last, and to go down the shaggy slopes of Meadow Mountain to Little Meadows, where it was more open and light, with room to camp.

Here, one day, Washington was asked to remain in the general's tent after the other aides had been given their orders and withdrawn. General Braddock spoke very freely of his disappointment at the slowness of the march and asked Washington's opinion of the situation.

"I think you have more men than are needed," said Washington. "It would be wise, I believe, to push on in haste, taking only the light division and leaving the heavy troops with most of the baggage. Fort Duquesne is as yet but weakly garrisoned. The long dry weather has kept the rivers low so that reinforcements could not be sent down from Venango and the lake. If we dismount the officers, take pack-horses only, and push on rapidly we will be sure of victory."

After Washington had left the tent, General Braddock called a council of field officers. Washington's rank did not entitle him to be present, but he learned later from Captain Orme that General Braddock had stated to his officers Washington's advice. A more rapid march was decided upon—but the army was still overburdened with wagons and cannon.

Twelve hundred men were selected from the entire army, but they kept their artillery, and in place of pushing on

rapidly, they always stopped to bridge the creeks and level the hills, so that they marched only a few miles each day. St. Clair and Colonel Gage were sent forward with four hundred men to clear the way. But the army was constantly overtaking the pioneers. Up hill and down the cannon had to be raised or lowered, sometimes by ropes, or dragged out of the swamps. Bands of Indians were constantly on the outskirts, terrorizing the men.

On the 21st of June they entered the colony of Penn, dropping over the hills to Stewart's Crossing on the Youghiogheny River. In ten days they had made but twenty-four miles. Washington, as he hung uneasily about the flanks and the rear, saw the long line of red-coated, heavily laden men, sweating in heavy uniforms, struggling with wagons and cannon, creeping through the silent woods which he knew were full of hostile Indians. The red uniform struck no terror to the Indian breast. It merely served as an easy mark for their rifles.

Washington had been ill with fever for some days, and at the Youghiogheny was so much worse that General Braddock finally ordered him to remain there until the fever and pain in the head were better, leaving with him a guard and his old and faithful friend and physician, Doctor Craik. While he lay in bed, most impatient and gloomy, he received a letter from Christopher Gist, who was acting as guide to the army that had gone ahead.

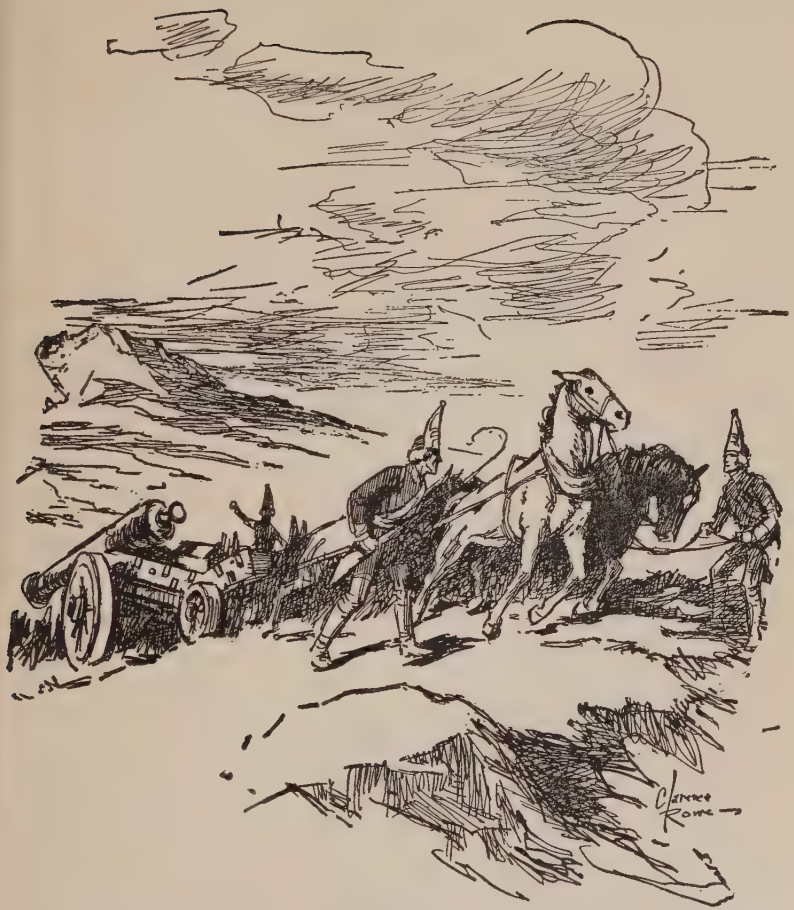
"We are moving along as solemn as a box-turtle," wrote Gist. "One day two miles, which any smart turtle might compass. The pickets are doubled, and the men sleep with their arms, for, if a branch cracks they give an alarm. If a poor devil strays there is a scalp gone, for every step of our march is watched. Still I am sure there are no big parties out, for I have been off in advance, and have been

within half a mile of the fort, and came nigh to losing my hair. But with decent good fortune we have the place. I should be easier with a few hundred of our own people in advance and on our skirts, but they are kept in the rear, the Lord knows why."

Captain Orme wrote that there were frequent night alarms, but that since he was now within thirty miles of Fort Duquesne, Braddock was confident of success.

On July 4 Washington, still too weak to ride a horse, determined nevertheless to push on, fearing he would miss the attack on the fort. So he rode, as best he could, in a wagon, jolted about and sore, over the rough roads, through Great Meadows, near which he had won his first fight, and past the ruins of Fort Necessity, where he had met his first defeat, eager to avenge the humiliation he had suffered there and to win back what had been lost for the king.

"Once, as my wagon approached the rear-guard," said Washington later, "we came upon a dozen or more stragglers. Some had fallen out tired, and some were loitering to gather berries. I called to warn them of the danger they were in. About a quarter of an hour later they ran after us crying 'Indians!' All the strange noises of the woods frightened them. This time the rangers said it was a wildcat. My bones were almost jolted through the small cover left them. At last the sound of martial music from the camps ahead revived my mind. Captain Shirley, the military secretary, who had ridden back with an order, said the army had been a month in marching less than a hundred miles. The fort seemed at our mercy and would be attacked next day. I advised them that it would be well if our officers could be dressed in wood colors, like our scouts. But Captain Shirley replied that General Braddock would never permit that. Next day, when I got rid of my fire-red



"We are moving along as solemn as a box-turtle." wrote Gist.

coat and put on a fringed buckskin hunting suit, I was no little jeered at, and Colonel Gage made some comments which, I trust, he came later to regret. I am of opinion that the absence of a gaudy red coat saved me from many balls and enabled me to be of use when the other aides were wounded.

"When in the afternoon, very tired and weak, I reached the tent made ready for me by the kindness of my brother aides, I lay down to rest and asked Captain Morris to tell me what was to be our mode of approach to the fort. I was able easily to recall the general features of the country. We lay some ten miles east of the Monongahela River, and about thirteen miles, as the crow flies, from Fort Duquesne. I rested and talked with the officers. Of them all I was the only one not killed or wounded in the next day's battle.

"No thought of to-morrow troubled our council of war. We discussed with spirit what our superior officers meant to do. I drew on a piece of birch bark a sketch of the country. Fort Duquesne lay on a bluff in the angle made by the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, just where they join to form the Ohio. We were some ten miles to the east of the Monongahela, on the same side as the fort. Between us and it lay the deep rugged ravines of Turtle Creek and the brooks which run into it. The country beyond was heavily wooded and without roads. To cross the creek and cut a road to the fort would be the most direct way; otherwise we must march to and cross the Monongahela, a fordable river, move along the bluffs three and four hundred feet high, for about five miles down the stream, then descend to the water, cross at a second ford to the same side as the fort. Then there would be before us a slope, and some two miles distant, hid in the woods, Fort Duquesne.

"Soon after came Sir John St. Clair, with a kind message from General Braddock. It had been found impossible to get the artillery across Turtle Creek, so it was decided to cross the Monongahela at the ford, go along the bluffs, and back again at the second ford, where the lay of the land, as was supposed, gave an easy approach to the fort.

"I was still weak, but although I could have desired more rest I walked at dusk through the great clearing made for the camp and reported to General Braddock. I have been sorry for his obstinacy and the rudeness he showed in laughing at our way of fighting, but I have been told by Sir Peter Halket that General Braddock said Benjamin Franklin and George Washington were the only trustworthy people he met in the Colonies."

"I am very glad to see you, Colonel Washington," said General Braddock. "How are you feeling? Are you well enough to serve as aide?"

"Yes, sir, thank you," replied the colonel, although he was feeble enough. "I congratulate you on the prospects of success before you."

General Braddock laughed.

"Where is the need of your rangers and your tribes of Indians?" he asked.

"May I ask permission to go in advance with the Virginia wood-rangers, so as to secure the pioneers and road-makers from ambush?" said Colonel Washington.

"Oh, plague take your half-drilled rangers!" replied the general shortly. "I shall keep them as a rear guard."

Colonel Washington arose.

"Colonel Gage is to have the advance," continued the general. "What would he say to the best regiment of the king being protected by a mob of squatters and border farmers? No, sir; I desire you as my aide."

Colonel Washington said no more, but returned to his tent.

"Long after the camp was at rest I remained sleepless," said Washington later, "hearing the quick waters of the creek and the noises of the wood, with the hoot-owl's cry and the chip munks gambling over the canvas of my tent and such stir of the camp as never ceased. The way we were to march troubled me and others, especially Sir Peter Halket. The two fords we were to cross could easily be held against us by a small party. Sir Peter Halket was especially depressed, having had one of those warnings of coming death in which Scotchmen so firmly believe. At length, having determined that if I were in command I would leave all heavy baggage and artillery to come by the fords and make a quick advance, I at last went to sleep and slept soundly, even through the reveille, until waked by my orderly upon what was to be one of the most eventful days of my life."

CHAPTER XI

PRIDE GOES BEFORE A FALL

CROSSING THE FORD—THE AMBUSH—DEATH OF THE HALKETS—PANIC AND RETREAT—THE WOUNDING OF GENERAL BRADDOCK—A BURIAL IN THE HIGHWAY—WASHINGTON READS THE FUNERAL SERVICE

Next day General Braddock's troops marched to within two miles of where the army was to cross the Monongahela. When Washington, still ill and very weak, walked through the camp that evening he found the men cleaning their guns, brushing their clothes, soaping queues, and pipe-claying equipment as if for parade.

On the morning of July 9 Doctor Craik found Washington chilled and full of aches; but in spite of this, when he had eaten and was in the saddle, he reported to General Braddock, a short distance from the river bank.

The general was in a gay humor, very kind, asking Washington if he felt well.

"Will you drink with me to the king in Fort Duquesne to-night?" he asked.

"It would give me great pleasure to do so," replied Washington.

Colonel Gage crossed the shallow ford to some open meadows on the other side. He was to secure the two fords of the Monongahela by which the entire force following him was to cross and then recross so as to be again on the same side of the river as Fort Duquesne.

Sir John St. Clair followed with three hundred axe-men and engineers. Washington watched the troops wade through the ford and march up the other side of the stream, their red coats disappearing in the forest.

"We have done well to come so far without trouble from the Indians," he said to Gist, who was beside him.

Gist laughed.

"They have never been away from us since we dropped you at the Youghiogheny. There they are now!" he replied.

Rifle shots rang out beyond the river. It proved to be a small body of savages, however, which was easily dispersed by Colonel Gage. It was then about six o'clock in the morning. The signal was given and the main body began to cross. The officers were in full uniform. The colors were proudly flying. The drums were beating "The Grenadiers' March," which Washington had first heard when he overtook Braddock. The troops waded across the shallow ford and marched up the other side.

Washington sat in his saddle, watching, with all a young soldier's pride, the fine body of men fall into ranks on the other side of the river and disappear into the woods. Then he rode back to hurry up the rangers, who had been assigned as a rear guard, instead of being sent scouting ahead where they belonged. He found about two hundred of them, clad in hunting shirts, fur caps, and moccasins, moving slowly, part thrown out to right and left among the trees. Washington delivered his orders as directed, then rode back to the ford, to see that the rear guard was well over the river and on into the forest. He found that a rough road had been cleared along the bluffs by the French and hurried through the woods beside the moving column to report that fact.

At noon they reached the second ford. After much delay, on account of the artillery, they crossed this. Washington said later that the march of the troops, with their

red uniforms, banners flying and drums beating, was one of the finest sights he had ever seen. Years later he rode over the field and saw better the trap into which they marched.

On both sides of the road, which was broad and much used, the ground rose. Here were dense undergrowth, trees, and a number of ravines, some very deep, some only five or six feet. These ravines were covered entirely by a tangle of grape-vines, brambles, and Indian plums, among the brush great pines and gum-trees. There was one especially long and deep ravine, the bed of a little stream. On the right the ground rose steeply. Beyond were the dense woods and a series of low hills, extending to Fort Duquesne.

The main body of troops, halting now and then, marched slowly up from the ford into the deeper woods, all very orderly, as if for a review in St. James's Park, London. Flanking parties were thrown out a little way on each side, but not far enough to discover either the ravines or the ambush which the French and Indians had prepared in the underbrush.

Suddenly heavy firing broke out in the woods ahead, among the rocks and bushes, and Washington recognized the all too well-known scalp yells of the Indians. He rode forward at once and found soldiers falling wounded or retreating. Captain Orme, who had ridden forward to get news for General Braddock, soon returned wounded in the arm. Sir John St. Clair was still advancing with his axemen and pioneers, the grenadiers following. Thick smoke rose from the advance in the deeper woods which now rang with rifle shots and the yells and cries of the Indians.

Sir Peter Halket was ordered to remain with a guard of

four hundred men for the baggage, and General Braddock himself rode forward with Colonel Burton's eight hundred men, ordering a bayonet charge up the hill to the right. The regulars advanced, shouting, "God save the King!"

Indians will never stand up against a bayonet charge—but they will seek cover of the trees, frontier fashion, and fire from there. So hot a fire met the red-coats that their officers, easy marks, were at once killed or wounded and the men forced back at a run.

For some time Sir John's men behaved with great courage, letting the dismayed pioneers pass through their lines. But they could not be induced to advance, and stood stupidly firing into the woods, where they could see nothing except the flashes of the rifles rapidly mowing them down.

"I never saw, in my later warfare," said Washington in describing the battle, "worse confusion nor a hotter fire, nor men better hid. The savages and French lay concealed in the ravines among the brush, and picked off the mounted officers, or fired into the masses of men. We were now caught on both sides among ravines, great rocks and trees, where in our front and on both flanks the enemy spread out in the woods. The more our force came up from the rear the easier was our slaughter. For a time I was with the general and implored him to order the men into the woods. Whether he heard me or not I cannot say. With our regulars shooting at random, the replies from ravines and woods, the orders of officers, the yells of the Indians, and the cries from the wounded there was confusion fit to turn any man's head. When the men tried to take wood shelter, as was reasonable and proper, the general and his officers cursed them for cowards and struck them with the flat of their swords. The poor dogs tried to obey their leaders, and

again and again formed into platoons, facing to right and to left, making them only easier to kill. I saw Captain Orme, of the artillery, fall dead, as they rode up with the cannon. The men with the swivels stood to it well in giving some shots, and then gave way. Seeing this I dismounted with two other officers, gave a man my horse, and aided to fire into the ravine on the right. But the few men left, who should have helped to serve the piece, soon dropped, hurt or dead, and seeing I could no further assist I mounted and turned out of the broken ranks to meet the Virginia rangers, who were running up the slope and spreading out to right and left, taking shelter wherever was a tree or rock, all most gallant and well done.

"Although the turmoil was such as I cannot describe, there were many brave efforts to rally and to carry the high ground above our right. At times, discipline prevailing, orders were given to storm the flanking slopes, and constantly failed to be effective, for as the officers were picked off, the men ran back to the main body. The smoke was, by this time, so thick as to obscure all things at a distance, but a sudden wind rising cleared it away, and I saw that we were giving way more and more. As I looked about me in despair my horse fell and rolled over dead. By good fortune I had learned in fox-hunting how to fall clear, and in a moment I was up. Captain Shirley, the general's secretary, fell dead quite close to me. His horse, amid all the tumult, stood quite still and began to eat grass. I caught him, and mounted.

"The Virginians, who had protected themselves behind a log, were being shot by the regulars, who knew no more than to fire whenever they saw smoke from behind a bush or tree. I tried to help General Braddock, who had five horses shot under him, effect an orderly retreat. Few officers were

left alive, and those who were unhurt could not get the regulars to obey a command. What was left of twelve hundred men were huddled together in groups in and out of the woods, as I have seen sheep in a storm. The general showed great courage, and made many attempts in person to rally his men. But he was as stubborn as ever as to the way of fighting, insisting on the men re-forming.

Sir Peter Halket, Morris and I vainly entreated him to order the soldiers to take shelter as the rangers did. As Sir Peter spoke he fell, shot dead, and his son, dismounting to help him, also fell dead across his father's body."

Years after, an Indian conducted a younger son of Sir Peter to the spot where he remembered seeing the two fall. He identified the place by a certain tall, peculiarly shaped tree, and they found, beneath the leaves, the two skeletons lying one across the other, that of Sir Peter being known by a gold filling in a tooth.

"I remember that, after an hour or more," continued Washington, "I suddenly became sure that all was lost. The whole disordered mass now broke and ran as sheep before the hounds, leaving artillery, provisions, baggage, the wounded and dying—in short everything."

Two hundred French soldiers and six hundred Indians had killed seven hundred English regulars, of whom eighty-six were officers. General Braddock had no expectation of being attacked. He was to attack the French. He kept trying to form his men in platoons and battalions, after the method laid down in the military books. The Virginians, trained to forest fighting, sprang behind rocks and trees, or fell flat on the ground and watched their opportunity to put a bullet through the head of a Frenchman or an Indian. Washington had two horses shot under him and four bullet-

"By good fortune I had learned in fox-hunting how to fall clear, and in a moment I was up."

holes through his clothes. But his time had not come to die, for Providence had a great work ahead for him.

From two o'clock until five the slaughter continued. The English regulars, huddled together along the narrow road, hemmed in on both sides, with never a sight of either Frenchman or Indian, fought bravely at times, and at other times were completely panic-stricken. The Virginians alone were cool.

Washington had lost his hat. He was pale and hollow-cheeked from his illness. Some of the Indians, seeing his eyes still burning with fever, thought he was insane. He rode everywhere, reckless of whistling bullets or flying tomahawks.

Years afterward an old Indian chief told Washington that he and his warriors had fired repeatedly at him that day, but that, when they were unable to kill him, they concluded the Great Spirit had destined him for some high service to his country.

Late in the afternoon General Braddock was under a great oak, and Washington was close beside him.

"They have got me," the general cried suddenly, reeling in his saddle, shot through the right arm and lung. Captain Stewart of the Virginians caught him as he fell.

Washington heard him cry:

"Let me alone. Let me die here."

The troops, throwing aside guns and knapsacks, were fleeing like sheep, too frightened to fight with what they called devils straight from hell. Washington did everything he could to stop the panic of the regulars, but he begged and threatened in vain. The wagoners cut loose the traces of their horses, and, mounting them, fled. The officers, some of whom had been effeminate and drunken enough

before, now acted bravely, but they were powerless to resist the mob of panic-stricken men, terrorized by the fire that kept pouring in upon them from their hidden enemies. They could hear the blood-curdling yells and cries of the savages, and occasionally see one dash out from the brush, or the cover of a tree, and then slink back a moment later with an unearthly yell, waving aloft in triumph a bloody scalp just taken. The demoralized troopers caught hold of the stirrups of Washington, and even of the mane of his horse.

"Don't leave your general to be scalped," shouted Colonel Orme. "I'll give you sixty guineas to carry him off."

But this plea was in vain. Captain Stewart of the Virginians and another officer took the wounded general in their arms and bore him from the field.

"The dastardly conduct of the regular troops exposed those who were inclined to do their duty to almost certain death," wrote Washington later.

So many of the officers were killed or wounded that Washington took command and allowed the men to shield themselves behind the trees, ranger fashion. The only fighting worthy of the name was done by the colonials, who had been all along the objects of British sneers. They held the fringe of the woods with wonderful courage, fighting at last, in their own way, taking cover whenever possible, and using their rifles with that deadly effect for which Americans have ever been famous, even to the present day. The regulars were by this time back near the ford, wading across, or on the other side. A few brave men, in clusters, were retreating doggedly, firing as they fell back. But they fired uselessly, at an unseen foe, while every shot of the enemy,

with a bright red uniform as a glaring target, told. The Indians, yelling in triumph, were crawling nearer all the time, wriggling like snakes through the underbrush, or leap-

Now and then the regulars would see a painted devil rush from hiding upon a wounded comrade.

ing suddenly, as is their custom, from the cover of one tree to that of the next. Now and then the regulars would see a painted devil rush from hiding upon a wounded comrade of theirs, grab his hair in one hand, give a quick circular

movement with a scalping knife, and before they could fire upon him, leap back in triumph waving in their faces the bleeding scalp of the soldier.

The rangers had lost heavily, but those who were left protected the retreat of the regulars, slipping from one tree to another, until, with Washington, they were themselves back to the river bank, where there were no trees. Nothing except the trusty rifles of the scouts, fighting in their own way under Washington, saved the crack regiments of the king from complete massacre. Had not the Indians stopped to plunder the dead, rob the baggage, and collect scalps, and the French been too few in number to venture in pursuit the outcome would have been even worse. A part of the fine army which crossed the fords with such pomp but a few hours before was now scattered in retreat beyond the river, straying through the woods until at length, weary and worn, the remnant reached the camps.

All through the night and all the next day the English fled, the Virginians, under Washington, protecting the rear and carrying the wounded general. It was the custom in those days for an English officer to wear a sash of scarlet silk net-work, with which to bear him, if wounded, from the field. General Braddock wore such a scarf, and in it he was borne, suffering greatly. That scarf, with the date of its manufacture, 1707, and the initials E. B. woven in it, and with the dark red stains made by the blood of the wounded general, may still be seen at Winchester, Va., by any boy who is willing to spend a most delightful summer vacation hiking or riding over the ground made famous by the Father of his Country.

General Braddock was put in a tumbril, then on a fresh horse. That night the sentinels thrown out deserted in an

hour. Washington, though still very weak from his own illness, remained beside General Braddock all night. Doctor Craik, who cared for the general's wound, told Washington that Braddock would certainly die before dawn; but he lived four days, which proved to be among the most trying of Washington's entire life. The nights were even worse than the days. The troops plodded along wearily, armed and expecting every moment to hear the yells of the Indians in pursuit, talking sadly over the battle, wondering as to the fate of their wounded comrades left on the field. The regulars, terrorized first by the tales the rangers had told them in the early days of the march, of rattlesnakes, bears, and Indians, and later by the new type of unseen foe they had met, were now as helpless as babes in the woods. Washington caught a stray wagon-horse, and rode him, with a rope bridle and no saddle but a blanket. All night he rode on in the drizzling rain, and all the next day, very disheartened and ready to drop with illness and fatigue, and indeed falling to the ground when he dismounted at camp. Here he secured from those ahead provisions, a better horse, and a wagon to bear General Braddock, and rode back with these, meeting the general at Gist's cabin.

They halted half a day at Dunbar's camp, then hurried on to Great Meadows. There were enough men left, Washington and some of the others believed, to return, surprise the French, and still capture Fort Duquesne. But Gist and others said the men were already defeated, having thoroughly lost heart.

General Braddock's proud spirit broke when he learned that Colonel Dunbar was retreating toward Philadelphia and intended to wait there for reinforcements. He suffered greatly in body, and more in mind, during the four

days and nights in which he was jolted over the rough roads. For the most part he was silent, only now and then groaning.

"Who would have believed it possible?" he would say from time to time, over and over again. "We shall know better next time. But what will His Grace the Duke of Cumberland say? What will he say?"

On the morning of July 13, Doctor Craik notified Washington that General Braddock had made his will and wished to see him.

"That is the only hand that is left," the general said, reaching out his left hand as Washington approached. The bullet had gone through his right arm, which was helpless. Although Braddock had a reputation as a great wit, Washington was surprised that a man just about to die should have the spirit to use his dying breath in a jest.

"I want you to take my horse, and my man Bishop," continued the general. "I have told St. Clair. I should have taken your advice. Too late; too late!"

After that he closed his eyes, and a little later opened them again, saying feebly:

"If I lived I should never wish to see a red coat again. My compliments to the governor. How they will curse me!"

Washington withdrew, being too weak to endure the heavy sorrow at this brave man's end, for, though foolish and mistaken, he had been courageous and a good friend to the young Virginian.

He endeavored to distract his mind by examining the remains of Fort Necessity, which he had built near there earlier. He found that there was little discipline among the troops. As is often the case, where there are too much drill and mechanical order a defeat does away with disci-

pline entirely. The colonials had been hard to drill and instruct, but every man had been trained for years to rely upon himself without waiting for orders. So, in a crisis, then as always, they were self-reliant, and suffered less during disaster. In a retreat or any unforeseen emergency they knew how to take care of themselves. Those fighting qualities which won at Château Thierry and in the Argonne Forest were learned at Fort Necessity, at Braddock's Field, at Valley Forge, at Gettysburg, at Antietam, at Lookout Mountain. It is because of this inheritance, direct from Washington, that the Old Flag has never touched the ground, and that, please God, it never will, so long as the Scout Spirit burns brightly in the souls of American lads. Americans hate wars—but they win them!

Sick and worn out, Washington sought his shelter among the Virginians, threw himself wearily down and fell fast asleep, never waking until called by Captain Stewart.

"General Braddock is dead," the captain announced. "We are to move at once. Every screech-owl is an Indian for these whipped curs. The general is to be buried in the roadway, so that the red devils may not dig up his scalp. Colonel Dunbar asks that you read the service."

"It was just before break of day," said Washington later. "We committed to the grave my brave general, whom, being dead, every one would abuse. There were great fires burning, with all manner of baggage and stores thrown on them. The regulars were chopping up artillery wagons and throwing ammunition into a creek.

"About a hundred yards from my hut, in the middle of the road, a deep grave was dug. A few officers and men were gathered about it. On the ground lay the general's body, wrapped in his cloak, but no coffin," continued Washington.

Colonel Washington took the prayer-book, which the orderly handed him, with a marker at the funeral service. Colonel Burton came forward with a flag and laid it respectfully over the dead officer. Then he placed General Braddock's sword upon it and fell back. All uncovered, while Washington read slowly, for the light was still dim, the solemn service of the church.

The soldiers lowered the body into the grave dug in the middle of the road, filled in earth and then added stones and bushes. No guard was ordered and no volley fired over the spot, lest the enemy, lurking near, might know. The army wagons drove over the grave of the fallen general, that his body might not be found.

Washington intended some day to erect a monument in memory of General Braddock. After the Revolutionary War he caused diligent search to be made for the grave, but it could not be found. About 1823, however, some laborers, while working on this road, found the remains, still distinguishable by the military trappings. Some of these trappings were sent to Peale's Museum, Philadelphia. The remainder were reinterred under a tree near by. Eighty-five years after the burial a seal with his initials, which Washington had worn and lost that day, was found. In 1871, over a hundred years after the battle, there was planted about the forsaken grave, just off the Old National Pike, nine miles east of Uniontown, a number of elms, spruces, larches, and willows.

On October 15, 1913, a monument was dedicated to General Braddock on this spot. For the occasion the English Government sent a special delegation, including officers of Braddock's old regiment, the Coldstream Guards —the first British soldiers in uniform that had stepped upon United States soil since the War of 1812.

Any lad anxious to keep burning in his heart the fires of patriotism kindled by Washington may, without great trouble, stand to-day beside the grave of the English general, on the very ground trod by the foremost scout, and listen, in imagination, to his voice as he slowly and solemnly reads the burial service of the church. America is not England, nor American customs English customs. There should be a monument to General Braddock in Westminster Abbey, among those who have made England's name great. In America our temples are more often among the trees, God's first temples!

CHAPTER XII

THE VICTORS AT THE FORT

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET—A CRUEL FOE—PRISONERS AT THE STAKE

Colonel James Smith was a prisoner in Fort Duquesne at the time of Braddock's Defeat, and has left a written account of what happened there, which gives us another view.

The French commandant at the fort had previously learned from his Indian scouts that an expedition was being organized, and that apparently his only chance of successful resistance lay in receiving reinforcements. These could only come down the Allegheny from Venango. The river was so low, however, that it was impossible for the war canoes to descend. He was seriously considering abandoning the fort and making his escape when one of his officers asked permission to go out with a suitable force of French and Indians, prepare an ambush for the English at the second ford of the Monongahela, and try for victory. So hazardous was the undertaking considered that the commandant hesitated to assign troops for the expedition, and called for volunteers, as for a forlorn hope. To the summons, however, the whole garrison responded.

Many of the French officers dressed themselves in the Indian costume. Then they repaired to the ravines near where the Carnegie Library of Braddock now stands and, concealing themselves, waited patiently. They were constantly told of the progress of the English. The Indian scouts hovered all around Braddock's army, on the flanks, in the rear, and in advance. They watched, with mingled feelings, the triumphant crossing of the river at both fords.

The Virginia rangers got a footing behind a big log and began to give both French and Indians serious trouble.

At times they felt confident, so heedlessly were the English marching into the trap set for them. Why Braddock should not send out scouts, as they had done, they could not understand. The English were manifestly sure of success. As the French considered the size of the army coming against

them, the elaborate preparations, the wagons of ammunition and the train of artillery, they were inclined to flee without risk of battle.

But the chance for a successful ambush was so good that neither French nor Indians could resist at least a trial. So, carefully hid in the underbrush on each side of the road cut through the dense forest, they waited.

At last, when the advancing British were completely in the trap prepared for them the Indians and the French poured in, without warning, from every side, a withering fire. The red-coats were at first surprised, but not dismayed. They were brave soldiers, and had fought on many a bloody field. But on those fields they could see the enemy and charge with drawn bayonet, or stand and resist to the death. Here they could see nothing to charge. No enemy appeared to be resisted. But the woods rang with a new and savage yell. Unseen, the French and Indians poured in volley after volley upon their foe. The Indians easily picked the English officers from their horses. Every red coat was an easy target. The pioneers broke and ran. Then platoon after platoon marched up, only to be mowed down like grain before a reaper.

The Virginia rangers, whom the French feared most, got a footing behind a big log and began to give both French and Indians serious trouble. But suddenly a force of English regulars, seeing the fire come from the bushes, fired upon them, killing a large number.

The cannon terrified the Indians for a moment, and there was danger of a panic. But the French officers rallied them, and they soon saw that British artillery and infantry alike were firing at random into the woods, instead of at an enemy. The Indian chiefs recognized Washington, with his thin,

pale cheeks, and feverish eyes, and fired at him repeatedly, but were unable to kill him.

At length the English broke hopelessly and began to flee in retreat. The French officers were eager to press on to more complete victory, but the Indians, mad with drink and lust of spoil, began pillaging among the dead, adding scalp after scalp to their trophies. The French alone were too few to pursue without the Indians. So, instead of pushing after their retreating enemies, they returned in triumph to Fort Duquesne. Here those who had been left behind to guard the fort received them boisterously.

The French officers themselves would have held their prisoners safe until exchanged under the rules of war, but the Indians claimed their own prisoners, as their part of the victory, to be tortured and killed after their manner. And the French yielded to the demands of their allies.

An Indian runner arrived at the fort with the first news of the victory, reporting that Braddock would certainly be defeated.

"The Indians and French have surrounded him," the runner said. "They are concealed behind trees and in gullies, and keep up a constant fire on the English, who are falling in heaps. If they do not cross the river again, which is their only outlet, there will not be a man of them alive by sundown."

Then there were a number of scalp halloos and a company of French and Indians came in. They brought many bloody scalps, grenadiers' caps, British canteens and bayonets, which confirmed the news of Braddock's ignominious defeat.

Another company, of about a hundred, followed, mostly Indians, nearly every one carrying scalps. A third company followed that one, with wagon horses and more scalps. They began firing small arms, then the big guns of the fort,

with the most hideous shouts and yells, as though the lower regions had broken loose.

About sundown a small party came into Fort Duquesne, with a dozen prisoners, stripped naked, their hands tied behind their backs, their faces and part of their bodies blackened. These prisoners were taken by the Indians to the bank of the Allegheny River opposite the fort, tied to stakes and burned, the Indians piercing their flesh with fire-brands and red-hot irons, the prisoners screaming while the Indians yelled like infernal demons.

It was the news of this barbarous cruelty that made the English more determined than ever to capture Fort Duquesne. The British bulldog is not easily induced to let go—and least of all by torturing men who, under the rules of civilized warfare, are entitled to humane treatment as prisoners.

A burning anger and a fierce determination to be revenged swept through colonies and mother country alike, similar to that which, a century and a half later, followed the shooting of nurse Edith Cavell.

War, with all its horrors, has rules which all self-respecting nations themselves obey and require their allies to observe. One of the first of these is that the lives of prisoners of war and of women and children are not taken.

CHAPTER XIII

HOME AND GLORY

GREENWAY COURT AND MOUNT VERNON AGAIN—THE LIFE OF A VIRGINIA GENTLEMAN—COURTING MARTHA CUSTIS

Perhaps no small battle in history has had a greater or more lasting effect upon the minds of two nations and their soldiers than Braddock's defeat. The value of the king's regulars was shattered once and for all in the colonies. It became a proverb in Virginia to say a man "ran like a regular." And when in due time the Americans were called upon to face the red-coats at Lexington and Bunker Hill they did it with the same confidence and the same steady nerves and straight-shooting rifles that have ever carried our armies to victory.

A young nation, like a young person, learns more easily and more quickly than one that is older. America rapidly learned the lesson of self-reliance, more rapidly indeed than England has learned how to meet new conditions.

General Braddock being dead, Washington's service as his volunteer aide was at an end. Colonel Dunbar's men retreated the entire way to Philadelphia, plundering and stealing as they went in their cowardly haste. Benjamin Franklin and the Pennsylvanians were out of all patience with such defenders. The settlers in the border counties were in the greatest danger from the French and marauding Indians.

Washington invited two of his fellow-aides to go home with him, but they preferred to go on to Philadelphia. Colonel Washington stopped a day at Winchester, at a poor

inn, where he was cared for by Bishop, General Braddock's man. Lord Fairfax came at once, and persuaded Washington to return with him to Greenway Court, to rest until he was more fit to travel. He brought with him a good horse, which Washington was glad to have, never having received the horse General Braddock wished to give him.

At Greenway Court Washington found many letters awaiting him, one saying that he had been given up as killed, with an account of his dying speech, and another from his mother, greatly concerned for his safety.

Washington wrote to his brother Jack as follows:

Fort Cumberland, 18 July, 1755.

DEAR BROTHER:

As I have heard, since my arrival at this place a circumstantial account of my death and dying speech, I take this early opportunity of contradicting the first, and of assuring you that I have not as yet composed the latter. But, by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability and expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, altho' death was leveling my companions on every side of me!

We have been most scandalously beaten by a trifling body of men, but fatigue and want of time will prevent me from giving you any of the details, until I have the happiness of seeing you at Mount Vernon, which I now most ardently wish for, since we are drove in thus far. A weak and feeble state of health obliges me to halt here for two or three days to recover a little strength, that I may thereby be enabled to proceed homewards with more ease.

I am, dear Jack, your most affectionate brother,

GEORGE.

The rest and hospitality of Greenway Court, together with the company of his old friend Lord Fairfax, soon revived Colonel Washington. He reached Mount Vernon

July 26 at 4 P. M., we are told in his diary, a poorer man for all his campaigning, and, he feared, with a good constitution much impaired.

Soon after arriving he received many letters congratulating him upon his escape unhurt and expressing a general satisfaction that amidst cowardice and ill management the Virginia rangers behaved with spirit and courage. Among these letters was one from Benjamin Franklin, which began as follows:

Philadelphia

To Colonel George Washington.

Respected Sir: I am the richer for having had the opportunity of making your acquaintance, and I ought not to conceal from you the pleasure I have had in learning of late that your conduct in the humiliating defeat of General Braddock was such as to be a matter of just pride to the Colonies.

Washington was weak from fever and smarting under defeat. Nothing appealed to him so much as the quiet and peace of his life as a country gentleman at Mount Vernon. But he was not allowed to rest. After the retreat of Colonel Dunbar toward Philadelphia, Virginia was left in a state of great alarm. The assembly came together, voted abundant money, and ordered a regiment of a thousand men to be raised. Washington was offered command of all the Virginia forces on his own terms, and accepted. Virginia believed in Washington and he was ready to serve her.

He had been a daring pioneer fighter, and a soldier of great courage and promise. He had learned many things in the hard, hard school of adversity, something of the art of war in his contest with the French and Indians, together with much of the dulness and inefficiency of other men, with whom he must patiently work if he was to succeed. He

Washington met, wooed, and won Martha Custis.

learned wisdom and skill in the management of men, one of the greatest lessons in life. Honors had been thrust upon him. He rode in triumph to Boston, mounted on one of the finest of his horses, wearing his uniform of buff and blue with a white and scarlet cloak over his shoulder and a sword-knot of red and gold. Beside him rode his two aides; behind came his servants.

His fame had gone before him. Every door flew open

to him as he passed. Every one was delighted to see and to welcome the young soldier. He was fêted and dined in Philadelphia and again in New York. In Boston he was equally well received, succeeding in securing for himself and for his officers king's commissions which settled all contests regarding rank.

About this time he met, wooed, and won Martha Custis—while his man Bishop was left holding the horses and waiting impatiently for his master to continue his journey.

During his absence there had been an Indian uprising on the western boundary of his command. He returned to Mount Vernon, saw all his horses again, "Valiant," and "Magnolia," and "Chinkling," and "Ajax," galloped over his estate with them and his dogs "Vulcan," and "Ringwood," and "Music," and "Sweetlips,"—all glad to see their master home once more—then hurried off from his beloved Mount Vernon to the frontier, determined this time to capture Fort Duquesne.

Shortly after this he wrote the following letter to Martha Custis, his affianced wife:

July 20, 1758.

We have begun our march for the Ohio. A courier is starting for Williamsburg, and I embrace the opportunity to send a few lines to one whose life is now inseparable from mine. Since the happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another self. That an all-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend,

G. Washington.

So he set out on the third attempt to capture Fort Duquesne. There is an old saying: "The third time is the charm."

CHAPTER XIV

VICTORY AT LAST

THE THIRD ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE FORT DUQUESNE—MAJOR GRANT'S DEFEAT—THE FORT BLOWN UP BY THE FRENCH—THE CANOES RETREAT DOWN THE OHIO—THE HIGHLANDERS FIND THEIR OWN—WASHINGTON RUNS UP THE ENGLISH FLAG OVER FORT DUQUESNE

The cowardly and unnecessary retreat of Colonel Dunbar's reserve army was worse in its effects on the provinces of Pennsylvania and Virginia than even the defeat of Braddock. "Dunbar the Tardy," he was called. He disregarded the petitions of the whole border to defend them, as well as that of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Had he made a stand, even at Fort Cumberland, there would have been a rallying-point. Instead, and contrary to all the impulses of prudence and courage which should govern a soldier, he destroyed his stores and ammunition and retreated with his demoralized and panic-stricken mob clear to Philadelphia.

The whole frontier country was, therefore, left naked and unprotected. All hope was abandoned. The inhabitants, finding themselves deserted, without money, leaders, or organization, also became terrorized. They left their homes, their growing crops, and their stock and moved back to and even beyond the Susquehanna.

It was some time before the French and their Indian allies discovered how badly the country was frightened after Braddock's defeat. Little by little, however, bands of roving French and Indians, scouting and robbing through the country, reported that, at their mere appearance, whole

communities took flight, deserting their homes, their crops, and their cattle. Made bolder by this, both French and Indians entered keenly upon the work of pillage and slaughter.

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The Indians living along both sides of the Allegheny Mountains, who were friendly to the English, became at first discouraged, then defiant, and finally hostile, and joined in burning houses, destroying grain, and murdering settlers.

The whole country from New York far down into Virginia became the scene of the most wanton destruction and inhuman barbarities.

Sad days had fallen upon England, at home and abroad. Everything English was at the lowest ebb. On all sides were defeat, disgrace, despair. This continued until, as has happened in so many dark days for England, a strong man came forth and saved the nation. William Pitt, after whom Pittsburgh, which occupies the site of Fort Duquesne, was named, seized the helm and steered the ship of state safely through the storm. His nerve and decision and ability soon gave matters a different appearance.

One of his first decisions was to make another attempt to capture Fort Duquesne, and to recover for England that vast region lost by Braddock's defeat. He ordered the immediate collection of a large force in the colonies. He sent a brave and skilful Scotch fighting soldier, General John Forbes, the "Iron Headed," as he was called, with thirteen hundred fighting Highlanders to reinforce the Pennsylvania and Virginia troops.

Washington, after his appointment as commander of the Virginia troops, was without an army. He checked, by his mere presence, the panic and undertook the trying and dreary task of defending the frontiers. In terse terms he covers all that need be said of three years. In April, 1757, he wrote:

I have been posted, then, for more than twenty months past, upon our cold and barren frontiers, to perform, I think I may say, impossibilities; that is to protect from the cruel incursions of a crafty, savage enemy a line of inhabitants, of more than three hundred and fifty miles in extent, with a force inadequate to the task.

Troops were voted, but were raised with difficulty. When finally raised they were neglected and ill-treated by the wrangling governor and assembly. This brought much ill-suppressed wrath in the breast of the commander-in-chief, laboring, day and night, to secure better discipline in camp. The troops were almost worthless when they came.

While the soldiers, resentful and insubordinate, tried the patience of Washington sorely, the assembly, with its faltering and delays, was worse. Meantime the French and Indians harassed the long and exposed frontier. Panic reigned everywhere. Homes and villages went up in smoke. Robbery and murder were rampant. Each new raid increased the terror.

Washington raged against the abuses and inaction, vowing that nothing but the great danger prevented his resignation.

"The supplicating tears of the women," he wrote, "and moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow that I solemnly declare I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

Washington kept steadily at work on his great task of getting ready to defend the frontier and repel invasion. And it was a task as great as his strength and patience could endure. But he was defending his own Virginia, and the Shenandoah Valley. His old friend Lord Fairfax, brave, sensible, soldierly, and influential, never failed him in counsel, means, or sympathy.

When at last William Pitt put new heart and strength into affairs in England, Washington eagerly offered his services to General Forbes, and his aid was gladly received. Once

more English troops appeared. But, all summer, delay and stupidity reigned again. Washington's advice was disregarded, although he was the one man thoroughly qualified by experience and ability to capture Fort Duquesne. All the weary business of building new roads through the wilderness was once more undertaken. England learns slowly. But, discouraging as it all was, and trying to the patience, it nevertheless supplied that training in endurance which gave Washington a spirit unconquerable and steeled his soul to bear the greater burdens and endure with matchless poise the greater hardships which later made his service to his country of supreme value.

One more bitter and galling defeat came before victory was finally won. Major Grant, sent forward with a detachment contrary to the advice of Washington, reached the hill from which Fort Duquesne might easily have been seen, except for the dense forest. But here, like Braddock, he was surprised by a force of French and Indians who had sallied forth from the fort under Colonel Boquet, was ignominiously defeated, and only saved from utter annihilation by the rangers from the provinces. A bronze tablet on the walls of the court-house of the city of Pittsburgh to-day marks the spot of the last failure in the efforts to bring Fort Duquesne to the dust.

The army of General Forbes, after innumerable hardships and disheartening delays, had dragged its weary way to Turtle Creek on the 24th of November, 1758. The general was sick and gaunt, but stout-hearted. He had been carried on a litter all the way from Philadelphia. His provisions and forage were so nearly exhausted that, even from that advanced point a retreat was seriously advised by a council of war. But General Forbes would not hear of

retreat, and swore he would sleep in Fort Duquesne the next night.

Meantime the victory over Major Grant proved very costly to the French. The commander of Fort Duquesne had delivered five of the prisoners taken from Major Grant over to the Indians to be burned at the stake, and the remainder were tomahawked in cold blood on the parade ground of the fort. Then the Lake Indians, believing the English completely defeated, deserted for their homes. The Delawares and Shawnees in the territory between Fort Duquesne and the Beaver River became sick of the war and anxious to return to their allegiance to the English.

General Forbes determined, ill as he was, to push doggedly on. That very evening a heavy smoke was reported in the direction of the fort. At midnight the camp was startled by the dull heavy sound of a great explosion.

The army pressed on, the rangers in their fringed hunting shirts in advance. Then came the Royal Americans, their drums beating a lively march. The old iron-headed General Forbes followed, gaunt but determined, borne on a litter. Last of all came the Highlanders, their bagpipes screaming, a long picturesque line in their kilts and plaids—the "petticoat warriors," as the Indians called them.

As the army approached the fort the troops passed along an Indian race-path. On either side was a long row of naked stakes, on each of which was impaled the head of a Highlander, killed at Grant's defeat. Beneath was suspended his kilts and accoutrements.

The Americans quickened pace and hurried on. Not so the Highlanders. When the Scots discovered the mutilated remains of their butchered brothers in arms there was at first a subdued threatening murmur, like the angry buzzing

of a swarm of bees. Rapidly swelling in violence, it increased to a fierce, continuous, low shriek of rage and grief. Officers and men thought only of quick and bloody vengeance. Inspired by a common fury, all discipline was cast to the winds. Their muskets were thrown to the ground and, bursting from the ranks, the infuriated Gaels, with brandished claymores, rushed madly on with hope of finding an enemy on whom to accomplish retribution. Startled at the sound of swiftly tramping feet the amazed rangers looked around. A headlong torrent swept by them, burdening the air with their deep curses and vows of vengeance.

They were too late. Fort Duquesne was in flames. The last boat of flying Frenchmen was just disappearing in the mist that hung over the Ohio.

In place of old Fort Duquesne, the scene of so many contests, and the prize for which two nations had fought so long, there was now but a heap of smoking ruins. The stacks of some thirty chimneys alone remained to mark the spots where houses had stood. One magazine only had refused to fire. In it were the only spoils the soldiers found, sixteen barrels of gunpowder and balls and a cart-load of scalping-knives.

Washington had the satisfaction of himself running up the flag of England over the burning fort of the French. As he stood at the point where the three rivers make a Y, gazing in turn across the Monongahela at the hilltops along which he and Gist and Captain Jack had scouted, then across the Allegheny to the shores where Braddock's prisoners had been burned at the stake by the Indians, then about him at the parade-ground where Grant's Highlanders had been massacred, and at last down the Ohio, flowing peacefully past the home of the Half-King, on its way to the Mississippi

and the sea, he wondered what the future might contain for that spot and for his country. He confidently dreamed that a great city would one day rise on the ground where, the next year, the English built Fort Pitt. But little did he dream that in time a million American people would dwell in the hills and valleys about the forks of the Ohio, where he had tramped so often; that the river banks would be lined by a thousand mills; that one day representatives of both England and France, allies then in a greater war, would meet the representatives of his own America on this very spot; and that, just where he stood, the ancient forests all gone, loving hands would plant new trees and place bronze tablets in memory of other brave Americans—lads who, in their turn, gave their lives for liberty and the land they loved so well, lads who constantly found inspiration in his patience and courage—who revered him as the first and greatest American.

Men are only boys grown up. The royal road from boyhood to noble American manhood is still open. Washington surveyed the route, blazed the trail, and trod every step of the weary but glorious way. There is no material from which to make great men and great Americans except good boys. Many believe that the American boy is just a little bit the best material the world has ever known for making brave men, good and stanch and true.

There have been good and great Americans since Washington's day. There will be others in the days to come. The same spirit made great Americans of the boys in blue and in gray at Gettysburg and Antietam, and of the sons of both at Château Thierry. General Pershing and the American Legion followed with success the best traditions of their gifted countryman, George Washington.

Washington fairly won the title of the First American. Not only the soldiers of his own time and country, but the soldiers of every time and country since have given him the honor of ranking among the few generals who have been really first in war.

In many ways it is harder and finer to be first in peace than in war. Years of faithful, devoted, self-sacrificing service for his country justly earned Washington the title First in Peace.

Harder and finer than being either first in war or first in peace is the task of being first in the real affections of one's fellows. It is not easy to make a goal on the football field. It is less easy to gain and hold first honor place through an entire course. Hardest of all is to win and hold the respect, confidence, and love of an entire school or community.

By his fairness, by a spirit ever undaunted in defeat, by his patient endurance of cold and hunger, of doubt and discouragement, of suspicion, of distrust, of stupidity, by all those qualities which go to make a good and great man George Washington won early and has ever held the honor of being first in the hearts of his countrymen. His realm has gradually reached out to the hearts of the whole world.

Longfellow once wrote:

> Heights, by great men reached and kept,
> Were not attained by sudden flight,
> But they, while their companions slept,
> Were toiling upward in the night.

The trials, the suffering, the discipline of his youth and early manhood gave Washington the experience and the wisdom which enabled him to serve his country and the world nobly and unselfishly throughout the remainder of his life.

As Lord Fairfax and others of the first gentlemen of Virginia were George Washington's models and inspiration, he, in his turn, has become the ideal of thousands of good scouts the world over ever since.